



Graphite Range

COMMUNITY FOREST



COMMUNITY FOREST MANAGEMENT PLAN

Adopted by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors

on _____, 2023

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the spirit of the US Forest Service's Community Forest Program, which provided a grant to make the Graphite Range Community Forest (GRCF) possible, this management plan and the vision were similarly a community effort.

Inspired by other local and regional conservation heroes, the Winter Family, through Wilton Partners LLC, acquired all subject properties for permanent conservation and invested in the entirety of GRCF trail system as a legacy gift to the greater Saratoga community.

Saratoga County's Board of Supervisors approved this project – the first of this kind for the County for County ownership. Municipal support was provided by the Town of Wilton and the Town of Greenfield.

Much of the heavy lifting for the project was carried out by Saratoga PLAN and the Open Space Institute (OSI). OSI led the USFS Community Forest Program grant application, as well as the transactional work needed to acquire the property on behalf of Saratoga County. Saratoga PLAN led the efforts to raise private donations, recruit and coordinate a volunteer Advisory Committee, and develop this management plan.

The members of the inaugural GRCF Advisory Committee all contributed their expertise and perspectives to this plan and development of the site for public access. The committee members included Derek Copperud, Seth Dunn, Molly Kalil, Jason Kemper, Anna Laloe, Shawn May, Drake McDonough, Courtney Roach, Kurt Smemo, Rich McDermott, and Ray O'Connor. Michael Gaige conducted the ecological assessment and field inventory and wrote the first draft of the plan.

Additional Support:

- Michael Naughton Sr., Esq. provided legal counsel on behalf of Saratoga County.
- Steve Ovitt of Wilderness Property Management designed and built many of the trails.
- Bob West of Old Saratoga Restorations and Bob Flansburg of Dreamscapes Unlimited provided helpful insights on preserving the ruins.
- Laura Byer of Byer Planning provided maps and signage plans.
- Bill Sprengnether of Fisher Associates developed trailhead plans.
- Will Aldrich, Douglas Meyer, Jeff Olson, Ethan Winter, and PLAN's Board of Directors assisted with community fundraising.
- Town of Wilton Highway Department built the parking area on Route 9.
- MJ Engineering provided services to acquire the NYS DOT driveway permit.
- Steve Quinlan built safety and directional fences.
- D.A. Collins donated gravel for the parking lot.
- Drake McDonough researched the geologic features of the site, as a Barnabus McHenry Intern.
- Many others, too numerous to list!

As a result of these efforts, the Graphite Range Community Forest will emerge as a well-loved and well-used community asset.



INTRODUCTION

The 225-acre Graphite Range Community Forest (GRCF) in Saratoga County, NY, is a conservation and recreation land acquisition effort in a region with a unique ecological and cultural history. The GRCF represents a significant investment in public recreation and conservation in a fast-growing area where development pressures and increasing population result in high demand for open space. The GRCF will ultimately protect 225 acres of hemlock and oak forest, the Snook Kill and Spring Run headwaters, a beaver pond, wetlands, and the culturally and historically significant graphite mine (and ruins) from 100 years ago.

The property is being acquired in two phases. The first phase, completed in 2023, encompasses 205 acres accessed from NYS Route 9 eastern gateway. The second phase will follow and will add 20 contiguous acres accessed from County Route 45 (Wilton-Greenfield Road) northern gateway.

Geographically, the GRCF is a part of the broader southern Adirondack Foothills or Palmertown Range Conservation and Recreation Strategy. The Palmertown Range is a relatively intact upland forest corridor encompassing roughly 40,000 acres. Approximately 8,000 acres are currently under permanent protection, within Moreau Lake State Park, Lincoln Mountain State Forest and Daniels Road State Forest. The Palmertown Range is part of the southern foothills of the Adirondacks and connects Saratoga Springs with the Adirondack Park and its mountains to the North. Protection of the Palmertown Range is a goal for New York State and Saratoga County; the areas was established as a priority in the most recent New York State Open Space Plan. It is also a highlight in the Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan and Saratoga PLAN's County Wide Landscape Analysis and Conservation Plan, and identified as one of The Nature Conservancy's Climate Resilient Landscapes.

The GRCF trails are part of a planned recreational corridor extending the entire length of the Palmertown Range. Thus, the GRCF property serves as an ecological and recreational connector for both protected lands and easements. Developed as a multi-use, community-managed forest, the GRCF will be a recreational hub for the surrounding communities and offer space for experiential and environmental education while permanently protecting the ecological values and durability of this southern Adirondack foothills property. The property includes rocky ridges, forested hemlock ravines with cold water habitat, northern hardwood and mixed-hemlock forest communities of varying ages, significant water resources, a network of recreation-ready logging roads, sustainably-built trails for mountain biking and hiking, and a century-old former graphite mine. The GRCF represents a modern community-investment approach to conserving biodiversity and ecosystem function while fostering public engagement, recreational opportunities, and a more vibrant community.



"When the Graphite Range trails are developed and open to the public, wonderful recreational, educational, and simply pleasurable opportunities will open up for folks with many different reasons for seeking the woods."

The nature and location of the property make it ideal for access by users with varying abilities and experiences. Easily accessed off N.Y. Route 9 (and eventually plans call for a second access from Wilton-Greenfield Road), the property begins with gently graded grasslands that serve as the gateway to the GRCF and allow people of various fitness levels to access the trails and historic sites.

The management plan described in this document was developed collaboratively by the inaugural GRCF Advisory Committee with help from Saratoga PLAN, Open Space Institute, Saratoga County, and outside advisors. Saratoga PLAN will serve as the County's initial Designated Land Steward and manage the property through a Stewardship Agreement with Saratoga County (see Appendix H). An Advisory Committee composed of community volunteers chosen by Saratoga PLAN and the County will assist Saratoga PLAN with stewarding the property. This plan provides (i) background on the property, (ii) specific objectives related to uses, adaptive management strategies and activities, community involvement, public access, and community benefits, and (iii) a governance structure describing roles of the partnering entities.



Outdoor education and exploration is already happening!

This is a living document that will evolve based on the needs of Saratoga County and be updated, with County approval, using sound data, expert opinion, and evidence-based decision-making. This plan outlines general guidelines and a vision. It includes updatable appendices regarding management background and policies that can be revised, with approval of designated County staff persons, without formal amendment of this Plan. Formal amendment of the main body of the plan requires full re-adoption by the County Board of Supervisors.

Funding and financial support have come from the US Forest Service Community Forest Program ([USES-CFP](#))'s Community Forest Program, Saratoga County, Wilton Partners LLC, and many generous donors. Advisory and other support have come from Saratoga PLAN and the Open Space Institute. The Advisory Committee began researching and writing this plan in January 2022 and continued until it was adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in August 2023.

GENERAL SITE OVERVIEW

The GRCF comprises ten contiguous parcels in the towns of Wilton and Greenfield, New York. Physiographically, the property lies in the southern Adirondack foothills. The primary topographic feature is the escarpment running north-south paralleling U.S. Route 9. This escarpment divides the hard upland crystalline rock to the north and west from the generally flat lacustrine glacial sands to the east and south. The vegetation is dominated by hemlock northern hardwood forest, with pockets of dry oak woodlands and wetlands. Historically, the land has been used periodically for timber and other temporary uses; however, its use as a graphite mining operation in the early 1900s has formed the most lasting imprint. The following sections expand on these broad points with details on hydrology, geology and soils, vegetation, cultural landscape, and land use history. The parcels that make up the GRCF are zoned Residential R-3 and Residential Business. From a recreational perspective, the property is vital to establishing the continuous Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails network, which will run the length of the Palmertown Range upon completion.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The GRCF consists of 224.52 acres (204.37-acre eastern gateway and 20.15-acre northern gateway) of forest among ten parcels in the towns of Wilton and Greenfield, NY. The property occurs on what is known as the Palmertown Range—a low, north-south trending ridge in north-central Saratoga County.

As previously noted, the area's main topographic and geologic feature is the escarpment created by uplift along the McGregor Fault that roughly follows the western side of U.S. Route 9. The highest points on the property occur at approximately 685 feet elevation along the southern parcel boundary. Several other points reach 660 feet. The lowest point on the property occurs along U.S. Route 9 at 350 feet. The property is topographically attractive, with approximately 310 feet of elevation difference from the parking area to these points. Locally, Palmertown Range high points rarely top 800 feet, and the range's high point occurs at 1200 feet elevation, approximately 5 miles north of the project area.

The GRCF includes three headwater streams of two watersheds. The main unnamed stream in the center of the property, a tributary to the Snook Kill has 4,100 linear feet of channel length before exiting the property and coursing under U.S. Route 9 and flowing into the impoundment of Lake Elizabeth. The water joins the main branch of the Snook Kill and flows approximately 15 miles Northeast to join the Hudson River in the town of Moreau. The southern part of the property includes 2,100 feet of channel and is a headwater basin of Spring Run. This water directly feeds Loughberry Lake—the principal drinking water supply for Saratoga Springs that serves more than 20,000 residents. Water flows from Loughberry Lake 4 miles to Lake Lonely and Saratoga Lake via Kayaderosseras Creek. It then reaches the Hudson River at Schuylerville via Fish Creek. All hydrologic flow from the site provides inputs to the regional aquifer underlying much of the Town of Wilton in the Saratoga Sandplains. Additional information on the property's water features can be found in the Field Inventory (Appendix B).



Exploring nature at GRCF

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The GRCF lies in a region of conservation interest known as the Southern Palmertown Range. This forested upland, at approximately 40,000 acres, forms the southeasternmost foothills of the 6-million-acre Adirondack Mountain region. The Palmertown Range is the largest forest block in Saratoga County outside the Adirondack Park. As such, Palmertown and the Graphite Range

Community Forest add considerable ecological and conservation value to Saratoga County—among the fastest growing counties in New York State.

Community partners, including Saratoga County, Saratoga PLAN, the Open Space Institute, local towns and cities, the State of New York, and local conservation groups, convened to develop the Palmertown Range Conservation and Recreation Strategy. The Strategy established the idea of promoting the area as a regional recreation destination while conserving its critical natural resources. The strategy aims to bolster the region's economy through its forest products industry, and potential for outdoor recreation and tourism by creating an accessible regional network of connected, protected lands.

The Palmertown Range links many local communities and landscapes and provides a significant ecological linkage between the Adirondack Park, Lake George, the Capital Region, the Hudson Valley, and the Taconic and Green Mountains of Vermont. The Palmertown Range is ecologically significant and boasts extensive, unfragmented, diverse forests and wetlands serving as a wildlife corridor and climate resilient landscape.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

The GRCF was initiated by the Winter Family who formed the Wilton Partners LLC and undertook a series of land acquisitions of adjoining parcels to create this community asset. The land was subsequently conveyed to Saratoga County in the fall of 2023, through the assistance of the Open Space Institute, Saratoga PLAN, and the US Forest Service. This management plan was developed through a partnership of Open Space Institute, Saratoga PLAN, Saratoga County, and the volunteer GRCF Advisory Committee (comprised of local experts, officials, and community members). This collaboration was established to help guide the development of the GRCF and implement the coordinating Management Plan for stewardship of the community forest.

Considerable community engagement was completed for the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails in the Palmertown Range. The results of this effort were used to help guide the creation of the GRCF Management Plan. After this initial outreach, Saratoga PLAN and the GRCF Advisory Committee will develop and maintain long-term partnerships and communication with community members and groups.

The GRCF and the entire Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails system will serve as an integral liaison between our thriving local community and accessibility to outdoor recreation opportunities for all ages. The Saratoga region is increasingly more health conscious and embracing active and healthy lifestyles, including opportunities to spend time outdoors.

In addition, the Graphite Range portion of the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails spreads across the backdrop of many local businesses running along Route 9, thus providing an opportunity to collaborate with various industries. These include small businesses, medical, hospitality, dining, garden centers, etc.

The Designated Land Steward, in consultation with the GRCF Advisory Committee, will review requests from surrounding schools, recreation and conservation organizations, higher education institutions, etc., to use the property as educational and recreational experiences that would benefit these groups. The objectives of Saratoga County, and the project partners, are to protect the natural resources on the property while also utilizing the property to provide a space for recreational and educational experiences. These objectives will enhance the regional economy

while delivering equally critical but less quantitative benefits to the community, such as improved public health and connection with the outdoors.

PROJECT SUPPORT AND COLLABORATION

The project is possible through significant community support in the form of volunteer labor, professional expertise, donations of money, materials and services. Collaborators and supporters include:

- Saratoga County
- Town of Wilton
- Town of Greenfield
- Skidmore College
- Open Space Institute
- Saratoga PLAN
- Saratoga Mountain Bike Association
- Saratoga Shredders
- Adirondack Mountain Club
- Saratoga Stryders
- Over 100 early-stage donors made substantial financial and in-kind contributions as “Founding Friends” of the GRCF

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

Saratoga PLAN has agreed to serve as the County's initial Designated Land Steward pursuant to a Stewardship Agreement with Saratoga County (Appendix H), making it responsible for the primary stewardship of the GRCF property for two years from the transfer date. The Stewardship Agreement may either be amended, terminated or extended after two years. This Management Plan will be updated to reflect the transition of the primary stewardship responsibilities to the then identified party.

The GRCF Advisory Committee is currently a volunteer advisory committee of Saratoga PLAN. Under the current Stewardship Agreement between Saratoga County and Saratoga PLAN, the committee will assist PLAN and the County with the management of GRCF. The concept for the Advisory Committee arrangement is to demonstrate its reliability and capacity to manage the site, and possibly transferring responsibilities as a PLAN committee to a County committee appointed by, and directly serving, the County in the future.

SARATOGA PLAN

Saratoga PLAN is a conservation organization with expertise in the administration and management of open spaces, community forests, and land stewardship with and by volunteers.

Saratoga PLAN will be the guiding organization for the GRCF Advisory Committee and be the liaison between the Committee and the County. Saratoga PLAN will be responsible for reporting to the county according to the terms of the attached Stewardship Agreement.

The Stewardship Agreement outlines the following management activities to be carried out by the Designated Land Steward (PLAN), providing an average of 10 hours a week of service on an

annual basis. See the Stewardship Agreement, section 3.1, in Appendix H for a detailed description:

1. Volunteers, Interns, Contractors, and Partners: PLAN shall ensure communication, planning, coordination, training, oversight, and management for all volunteers, interns, contractors, and public and private partners assisting with maintenance of the Property and uses of the Property by the public.
2. Trails: PLAN shall ensure that trails are maintained in a reasonably safe condition.
3. Structures. PLAN is authorized but not responsible for maintaining bridges, boardwalks and bog bridging, fencing, barriers, kiosks, and storage facilities.
4. Signs, Kiosks, and Static Displays. PLAN is authorized to maintain all signs, kiosks, and static displays erected on the Property.
5. Parking Areas and Access Roads. PLAN is authorized to maintain all parking areas and access roads, with the exception of snowplowing and brush hogging which shall remain COUNTY obligations.

Within the confines of the Stewardship Agreement and this Management Plan, PLAN will propose an annual management and program plan to the County each year. All plans are subject to County approval.

GRCF ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The GRCF Advisory Committee currently serves as a consultative body of the Designated Land Steward for day-to-day management of the GRCF consistent with this Management Plan and existing Stewardship Agreement between Saratoga County and Saratoga PLAN (GRCF Designated Land Steward). The Advisory Committee and the Designated Land Steward will integrate other volunteers, individuals and organizations into site management, programming, and stewardship as appropriate. All stewardship activities must be approved by the Designated Land Steward which will be responsible for seeking County approvals as needed pursuant to the Stewardship Agreement. The Stewardship Agreement, attached in Appendix H and approved by Saratoga PLAN and Saratoga County, outlines the roles and responsibilities, governing principles, and limits of authority of Saratoga PLAN and Saratoga County.

The GRCF Advisory Committee and Saratoga County will assist the Designated Land Steward in overseeing the long-term use and management of the GRCF. The GRCF Advisory Committee will meet regularly to assist with the plan's successful implementation, preparation of the annual program and management plan, and review the plan and make recommendations as necessary for any revisions or successor management plans.

I. GRCF: LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT GOALS

As this management plan provides a road map for the future of the GRCF, it is guided by five primary goals, with the protection of natural resources being paramount:

1. Forest management to conserve biodiversity and sustain ecosystem function.
2. Protection of cultural resources for future generations.
3. Provide a diverse set of outdoor recreational opportunities and access to green space for the Saratoga County community.

4. Foster public education and interpretation of natural and human/cultural history.
5. Promote sustainable economic development in response to regional population growth and rising interest in and demand for outdoor activities.

II. INFORMATION TO SUPPORT LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT GOALS

A. Ecological Communities: The 222-acre GRCF is almost entirely forested. A small grassland area near the Route 9 parking lot, a beaver pond in the extreme west, and a cattail marsh in the north form the few open non-forested areas. The forest, however, has had continuous management for some 200 years or more. Roughly 45 acres of the property were harvested for timber in 2012. Coppiced oaks throughout the north side of the property indicate consistently repeated cutting from the 1800s through the early 1900s.

B. Biodiversity: The Palmertown Range, forming the southeastern corner of the Adirondack Foothills, provides an excellent corridor for wildlife and native plant species between the Green and Adirondack Mountains. The GRCF, part of the Palmertown Range, is considered above average for its resilience to climate change, according to The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Land Mapping model. The property has an array of habitats and climatic gradients that will help species diversity and ecological functions adapt to future climate changes. The property contains various ecosystems, including ravines, wetlands, cliffs, and forests.

Permanent protection of this property will prevent future development that might impair or destroy its ecological functions and natural resources, a likely alternative outcome in a rapidly growing region with significant development pressure.

C. Water Quality: The property forms the Spring Run–Loughberry Lake watershed headwaters and the Snook Kill watershed (see Site Description above for details). Permanent protection helps to maintain the source water quality of Loughberry Lake. Two streams on the northern end of the property drain into Snook Kill, a wetland complex important for the Town of Wilton aquifer. The forested parcel and these two headwater streams will further contribute to groundwater recharge.

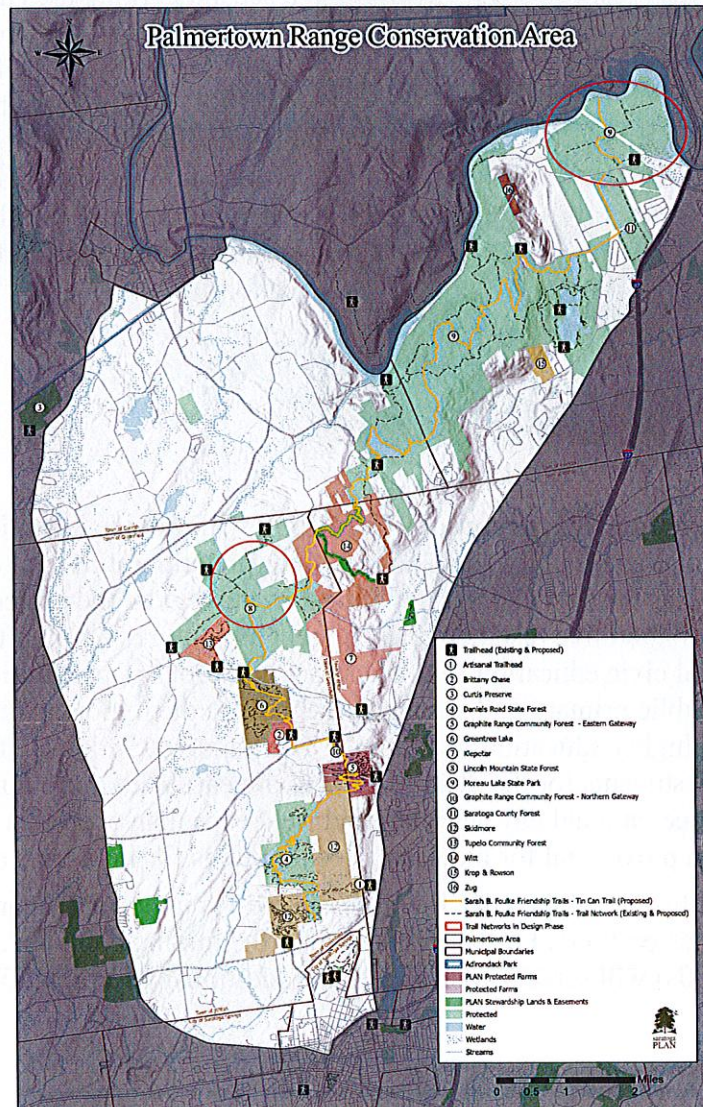
D. Carbon Storage: Deforestation and development of this property would release carbon currently stored in its forest, wetlands and soils. The property is estimated to store 112 tons of carbon per acre (The Nature Conservancy), above the average for New England forests. Protecting this carbon store is imperative to preventing further greenhouse gas releases while sequestering additional carbon over time. One goal of community forest management is to enhance and ensure the property's long-term forest carbon sequestration and storage functions, potentially serving as a model for forest owners throughout New York state.

E. Cultural Resources: The GRCF has several historical features associated with the graphite mine operation that existed in the early 1900s. See the excellent summary of that operation by Weatherwax (2008). The stonework is clustered in a couple of locations on the site, and the effort involved in extracting the graphite is impressive. The stewards of the property are now the stewards of this history, and the legacy remains on the ground.

F. Recreational Opportunities: The GRCF will serve as a dynamic central hub for noncommercial multi-use recreation that is compatible with preservation of natural resources, offering best-in-class trails and connections to the more extensive multi-use trail system

envisioned for the Palmertown Range. The property is adjacent to lands owned by Skidmore College and the Daniels Road State Forest. This area already features more than 20 miles of single-track mountain biking, hiking, and cross-skiing trails (multi-use) developed over the past twenty years by the Saratoga Mountain Bike Association (SMBA) and trail volunteers under the guidance of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation ("NYSDEC"). Increased demand for outdoor recreation spaces became acutely apparent during the COVID pandemic as local trailheads saw unprecedented usage. Thus, as the population in the region grows, so will recreational demand.

With suitable walking trails, the GRCF will enable greater access for a broad array of community members, including seniors, young families, and non-traditional trail users. The 20-acre "Northern Gateway" section of the GRCF, starting at the Wilton-Greenfield Road northern gateway trailhead and connecting into the western section of the 202-acre acquisition, will accommodate more accessible walking paths with less steep gradients. The centerpiece of the Palmertown corridor is the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trail network. When completed, the project will result in a 31-mile trail network, with a "Core Trail" linking Saratoga Springs and Moreau Lake State Park. The GRCF can function as a gateway to the larger Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trail network and provide strategic connectivity to other protected areas. A very intentional effort to make the Friendship Trails accessible, inclusive, and welcoming is underway.





Recently constructed trails at GRCF

Most trails will be suitable for multiple purposes, including mountain biking, hiking, trail running, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The GRCF features approximately 4 miles of newly constructed mountain biking (MTB) trails, 1.5+ miles of improvements to existing haul road trails, and approximately 2 miles of new multiuse and hiking trails as part of Phase I construction. Over 100 ft. of new boardwalks were constructed in Fall of 2022. Construction of the Route 9 parking area and trailhead in Wilton was completed by the Town of Wilton in May of 2023. Initial bridges and boardwalks were or will be completed to support this Phase over the northern and southern tributaries.

Phase II, planned for 2023 and beyond, entails new construction or enhancement of bridges and boardwalks; additional trails in the northern and southern sections of the property; and construction of a second parking area and trailhead at the Northern Gateway on Wilton-Greenfield Road. The "Core Trail" for the Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trails (SBFFT) will traverse the GRCF, linking Wilton-Greenfield Road on the north to Skidmore's adjacent property on the south, and will allow multiple uses. Many of the trails wind through historical features providing an opportunity to explore local cultural history.

G. Education and Interpretation: The GRCF will provide essential opportunities for noncommercial community education and interpretation of natural and cultural history. Additionally, as the first Community Forest in the region, the project is intended to serve as a model for collaborative resource management and future community forest development, which is an essential civic education role. There are numerous opportunities to engage younger citizens with eight public primary and secondary schools in the region and many pre-schools, educational centers, and higher education institutions. The Saratoga Springs City School District currently serves 6,379 students for the 2021-2022 school year. With more families and educators opting for outdoor recreational day activities and field trips than ever, this 222-acre community resource will prove vital for increasing local options for field trips and community events.

The cultural history of the GRCF will be shared via interpretive panels, online resources, and perhaps in-person tours. Further research into the mining company, the people, and previous owners (1800s) will serve as rich fodder for additional interpretation. While the details of the

community education programs will be determined through the management planning process and working with community partners, ideas generated for the property include:

- Nature/Natural History: Demonstration programs on topics such as flora identification or invasive species management, etc.;
- Historical interpretation of the graphite mines and other cultural legacies;
- Clinics on recreation activities and outdoor health and wellness classes.

H. Nature/Natural History: Local outdoor education organizations and programs can utilize the GRCF for hands-on learning opportunities for adult and children's groups to learn about conservation and stewardship. For example, Wilton Wildlife Park and Preserve is already a regional leader in environmental education and could be tapped as a strategic partner. Students have already researched carbon sequestration in various ecological community types on adjacent property owned by Skidmore College. Saratoga Shredders is introducing girls to the skills and joys of mountain biking through a rapidly growing local training program. These are just three examples of the potential for community education and interpretation of GRCF's natural and cultural history. Other opportunities include the addition of kiosk panels and interpretative signage, with the potential for future digital/mobile device applications to enhance the educational and interpretive aspect of self-guided and organized walks. Information on the kiosk panels and signage may include historical references, flora and fauna visual guidance, wildlife information, mindfulness activities, information about Native American activities, and the geology of the Palmertown Range.

I. Human/Cultural History: The GRCF features an extensive network of historical mining roads that are in good condition and primed for conversion to public use and enjoyment. These existing networks will be improved and expanded with the help of the community and local trail experts, thus enhancing the property's natural beauty and unique history. Opportunities to learn about nature and the Native American history of this land will also be included. Local historians will be a part of researching and helping to bring the stories of this land back to life for current and future generations to enjoy. The past mining history is significant from a historical perspective and it provides a unique opportunity to directly link geology to human cultural, economic, and industrial development.

Clinics for skills-based learning and outdoor health and wellness: Programs could include hiking, yoga, snowshoeing, forest bathing, etc. These programs will emerge as the community becomes more familiar with the site and realizes its potential.

J. Economic Development: The recreational opportunities provided by the GRCF will attract local and regional visitors. The MTB trail network can potentially attract riders from an extensive geographical area similar to the Slate Valley Trails or Kingdom Trails networks in the State of Vermont, thereby benefiting local tourism and recreation-related businesses.

The outdoor recreation industry in New York State generated \$41.8 billion in annual consumer spending and supported 313,000 jobs in 2017 ([Outdoor Industry Association Report](#); most recent data from 2020 reduced due to Covid-19 pandemic)). In the Palmertown Range region, visitation to Saratoga Spa State Park and Moreau Lake State Park attracts 3,500,000 people annually. Demand for outdoor recreation spaces in the region is increasing, with trailheads consistently being at capacity. This demand could be a direct result of the area's rapidly growing population and the Covid-19 pandemic. Saratoga County and the Town of Wilton are among the

fastest-growing municipalities in New York State, and the pandemic further elevated visitation at outdoor public spaces as people sought a place to safely unwind, meet up, and exercise.

A 2020 survey and analysis of community residents and stakeholders, conducted by Skidmore College Environmental Studies and Sciences students and faculty, found that community residents placed a value on the proposed Sarah B. Foulke Friendship Trail's value to the community ranged between \$6.86 million and \$53.6 million. While the valuation has a wide span, it indicates the demand for additional recreational spaces in the area and the value residents place on them.

Ultimately, the GRCF will make the Saratoga region a better place to live. As a result, GRCF makes the region more attractive to businesses seeking to relocate with owners who appreciate healthy, outdoor lifestyles.

III. FOREST MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Recommendations in this plan are guided by the Field Inventory conducted by Ecologist Michael Gaige (Appendix B) and the 2021 Forestry Assessment conducted by NYSDEC Forester Rich McDermott (Appendix C).

A. Forest Resources and Health: The property stewards and advisors with specific needed expertise, working under the Designated Land Steward, shall conduct periodic assessments and maintain an inventory of forest resources and health.

B. Timber Management: Because of the recreational nature of this property and the expected high level of use by a recreating public, as well as its recreational infrastructure, steep slopes, and limited access, commercial timber extraction for revenue-generation is inappropriate as a management goal. Forest conditions should be assessed (periodically) by a certified consulting forester with expertise in silviculture, stand management, and local forest ecology. Any tree removal, harvest, or stand management practices should be for noncommercial purposes such as forest health, public safety, recreational infrastructure, and desired forest community characteristics. Desired forest characteristics include a diversity of tree species in the canopy, understory and ground layers; multiple age classes; legacy "parent" trees with resilient genetics; abundance of standing deadwood and downed coarse woody debris; robust mycorrhizal subsurface communities; habitat for supporting native plants and wildlife, including birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, insects; prevention or reduction of soil erosion; climate resilience, as well as other characteristics identified in the future gained through scientific knowledge leading to a better understanding of forest communities. Recommendations for forest management actions are subject to approval by Saratoga County and are guided by the 2021 GRCF Forest Assessment attached in Appendix B.

C. Invasive Species: Exotic species are the second most significant threat to biodiversity after land development/use change. An invasive species inventory has not been conducted on the property. Saratoga County, working through its Designated Land Steward, will promulgate plans to monitor and manage invasive species. At trailheads, brushes, picks, and putty knives will be offered, along with instructional signage, for users to clean bike tires and boot bottoms before entering and after leaving GRCF as a way to prevent infestations of invasive weed seeds.

- Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA): In April of 2023 HWA was confirmed by NYS DEC Supervising Forester, Jason Denham approximately 1.5 miles north of GRCF. Additional NYS DEC confirmed infestations lie approximately 3.5 miles to the NE and 7.5 miles to the NW. Intentional surveying and planning are critical to protect the long-term health of the GRCF's forest, natural resources, and habitat.

Recommendations:

- Conduct annual Hemlock tree monitoring
- Hemlock Stand Prioritization should be conducted to prepare a calculated treatment plan.
- Forest Management Plans should be developed for each stand to allow for hardwood regeneration and/or improve Hemlock vigor if HWA infestation occurs at rates higher than can be treated.
- Emerald Ash Borer (EAB): Recommendation: Dead and dying trees infected with EAB should be left standing for wildlife habitat quality, in locations where they are not a hazard to trail infrastructure and public users.
- Spongy Moth (SM, fka – Gypsy Moth): Recommendation: Monitoring should be conducted during years of elevated populations. If egg masses occur in years of elevated populations, trail closures may need to be considered during the caterpillar stage due to large amounts excrement on the trail causing dangerous conditions.
- White Pine Needle Disease (WPND): The Forest Assessment notes that some pines within the GRCF are showing signs of WPND.

Recommendations:

- Annual White Pine Monitoring on-site and within region.
- Forest Management Plans that address creating space around WPND infested trees with the highest needle retention and opening the crowns for increased air flow.
- Invasive Honeysuckle: The Forest Assessment notes honeysuckle in the eastern portion of the property could potentially be removed by volunteers.

D. General Forest Management:

- Dead or dying trees that can be classified as hazard trees that threaten trails and users should be removed.
- Open areas should be maintained for breeding bird habitat.

IV. TRAIL MAINTENANCE OBJECTIVES

A. Trail Maintenance, Upgrades, and Expansions: The Designated Land Steward will develop and maintain relationships with partner organizations, municipalities, businesses, and volunteer groups for stewardship of the trail systems, historical interpretation sites, educational sites, and similar site amenities. The Designated Land Steward shall request the assistance of GRCF partners for maintenance, upgrades and expansions included in the GRCF Management Plan, subject to County approval.

B. Infrastructure Repairs and Upgrades: The Designated Land Steward will plan and execute infrastructure repairs and upgrades, with County approval. When appropriate, partner organizations and volunteers shall be engaged for support and assistance.

C. Parking Lots: The Designated Land Steward shall coordinate with Saratoga County and the Towns of Wilton and Greenfield to formalize agreements to maintain parking lots and parking lot entrances and exits.

D. Snow Removal: The Designated Land Steward shall work with Saratoga County and the Towns of Wilton and Greenfield to formalize agreements for snow removal on the parking lots.

E. Field and Main Trail/Path Mowing: The Designated Land Steward shall coordinate with the County and the Town of Wilton to formalize agreements for mowing the main trail and path at the Route 9 entranceway and the field above the parking area leading to the woodland trails. The paths along the cross-country ski loop will be mowed twice a year to maintain accessibility and reduce tick abundance. The field above the parking area on Routh 9 will be brush-hogged every 3 years to inhibit woody plant encroachment.

F. Signage & Trail Markings: The Designated Land Steward and the GRCF Advisory Committee shall monitor, maintain, and report the need for signage upgrades and trail markings, installations and replacements.

G. Historical Preservation: The Designated Land Steward and the GRCF Advisory Committee shall monitor the mines and historic sites for signs of degradation and undertake preservation efforts, in collaboration with Saratoga County. The Designated Land Steward will make its best effort to leverage local expertise for this effort.

The maintenance and preservation of the stonework and the public safety of mine access will be a priority. The County and its land stewards will need to ensure the ruins' preservation while facilitating access so that visitors can observe but not degrade the site. Prior to opening the GRCF, a safety fence was installed to provide a spot for viewing the mine openings from a safe distance. An interpretive sign explaining the graphite mining operation will be installed at the observation spot.

Efforts to slow the deterioration of stonework at the Lower works, Upper Work, and foundation locations could include: repairing and replacing failed stone constructions; removing trees from stonework where they will, in time, break apart walls and uproot entire sections; and identify any safety concerns such as piles of glass, steel rods, holes, etc. that may emerge over time.

V. MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS AND APPROVED USES

Protection of natural resources is the primary goal through which all uses and management actions will be filtered and considered. The GRCF is a multi-use forest, recreation, and trail system, but, due to land topography, approved uses, and interconnection to existing projects, some other uses will be prohibited, considered in the future, or evaluated if requested by community members. All allowed uses and prohibited uses, or deviations from this management plan must be proposed in an amended management plan and approved by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors prior to their implementation. The Designated Land Steward, Saratoga County, or any officer of the law may enforce the rules and regulations of this management plan.

A. PRIMARY USES:

1. Hiking, Walking, Bird Watching, Snowshoeing, Cross-country Skiing, Trail Running:

These activities are allowed and are considered primary uses of the GRCF and should be primarily constrained to developed trails.

2. Mountain Biking: This activity is allowed and is entirely constrained to trails designed and developed for this use. A Class 1 bicycle as defined by New York State law with electric assist is also allowed on GRCF trails designed for mountain biking. Class 1 E-bikes have the following general specifications:

- Pedal assist
- No throttle
- 20mph assisted top speed

3. Educational Classes by Non-Profit Organizations, Schools, or Government Entities: Non-commercial educational activities are allowed on the GRCF. The Designated Land Steward in conjunction with the Advisory Committee should develop processes for approving educational uses that are consistent with County rules and procedures. Post-sunset use of the property is limited to full moon or owl prowl type walks lead by a sanctioned guide.

4. Historical Site Exploration: This activity is allowed and exploration of mining excavations and structures may be permitted on a limited and guided basis based on preservation needs. The boundaries of each site will be marked or fenced to promote trail users' safety and preserve the mines and structures.

B. SECONDARY USES:

1. Dog Walking: This activity is permitted, with leashes mandatory. Owners will be responsible for bringing waste bags and disposing of them at an off-site location.

2. Geocaching and Orienteering: These activities are allowed, with limitations to exclude caches and orienteering from affecting restricted or protected areas.

3. Events: Organized events, such as group rides or walks with >25 people or bike/running races will need to be approved by Saratoga County in the annual plan and with the required County permit. Approval will depend on the impact of the event, number of people, capacity of parking area, and stewardship capacity. Saratoga County, Saratoga PLAN, the GRCF Advisory Committee and volunteers will need to be indemnified by proof of liability insurance for events.

GRCF cannot be used for commercial activities nor for fundraising other than for funds raised directly for management of the GRCF itself and operations necessary by the Designated Land Steward.

C. PROHIBITED USES:

1. Trapping: Trapping is not allowed due to the recreational priority of this property except for ecological or safety reasons (i.e. rabies outbreak) and with adequate signage and trail closure safety protocols. Due to the presence of wandering children and pets, snares, body restraining, or leg-hold traps are not allowed.

2. Hunting: Hunting is not allowed based on the land's topography and expected usage except if needed for ecological or safety reasons. Use of rifle, shotgun, or bow/crossbow hunting for deer or game animals is incompatible with the level of anticipated use by hikers, bikers, and other recreationists. The Designated Land Steward – in consultation with NYDEC biologists, foresters, or other experts—will continue to evaluate recreational use patterns and deer browse damage and make future recommendations to the County for approval related to a limited managed hunting program.

3. Discharging Firearms: This activity is not allowed at GRCF due to the level of anticipated use by recreationists.

4. Plant Harvesting: Plants or other sessile organisms (e.g., mushrooms) may not be harvested for use in situ (eaten on the property), removed for later consumption (i.e., cooking at home) or for sale.

5. Commercial Timber Harvest: Timber may not be harvested for revenue-generating purposes. However, timber may be harvested for ecological, safety and forest health purposes. If harvested for ecological, safety or health purposes, harvested timber may be sold.

6. Camping: No camping or other overnight use of the property is permitted.

7. Horseback Riding: Horseback riding is not allowed based on the land's topography and expected usage. One neighbor of an adjoining property to the west has rights to ride horses on the GRCF due to a deeded access right prior to County ownership.

8. Drones and Remote-controlled Model Airplanes: Flying aircraft are not permitted over the GRCF unless they are being used for ecological, rescue or other site management purposes.

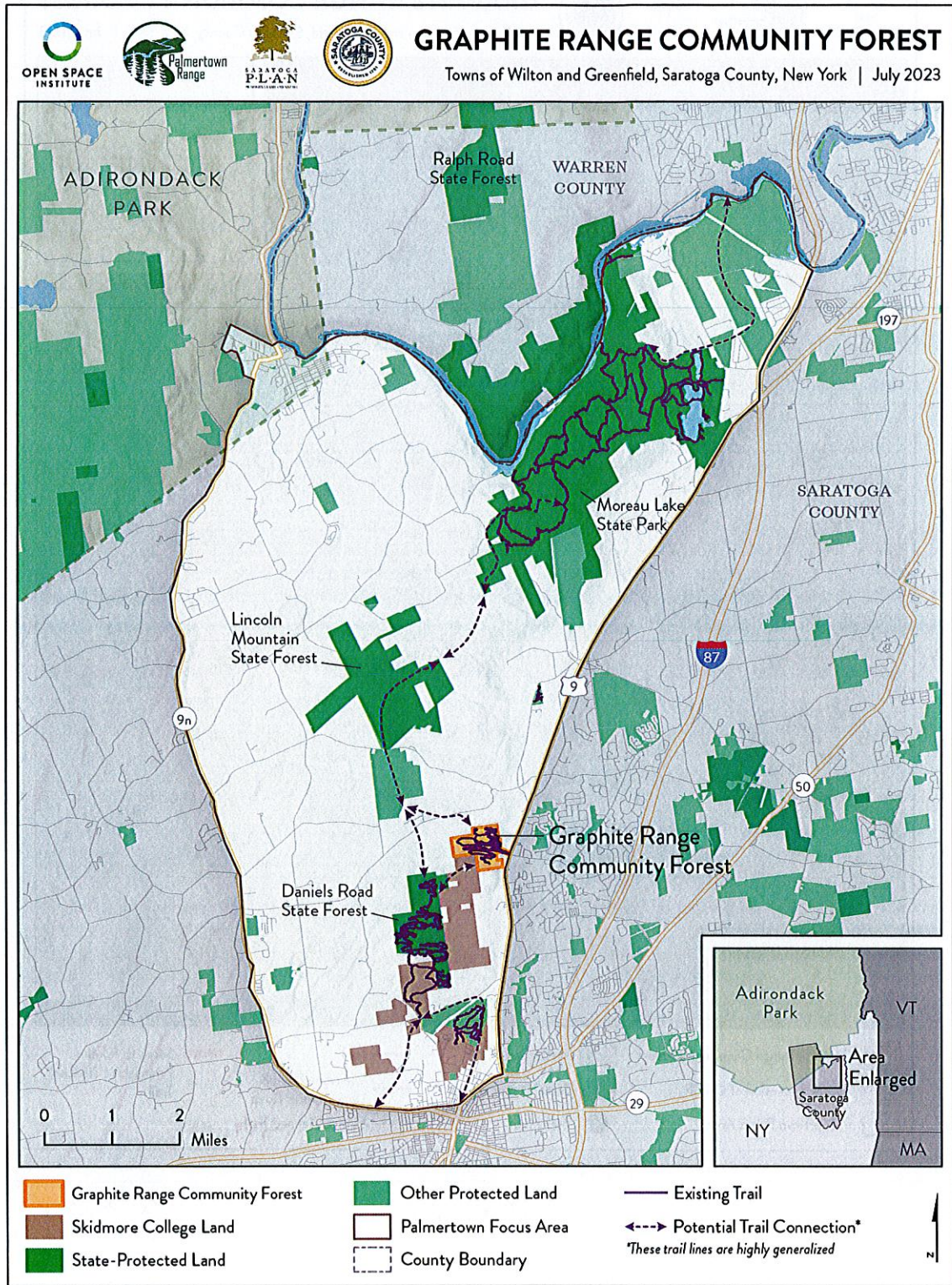
9. ATV and other Motorized Vehicles: ATVs and other motorized vehicles are not allowed based on the land's topography and expected usage. ATV and other motorized vehicle use will be permitted to provide emergency access for first responders. ATV use is also allowed by the County and by those approved by the Designated Land Steward to perform necessary and approved trail and infrastructure maintenance and materials transport. Per the recommendation of the 2021 Forest Assessment (Appendix B), all tires, tracks, and treads utilized in trail maintenance and material transport should be properly cleaned before entering GRCF for the protection of native species from invasive species seed distribution.

10. Motorized (non Pedal-Assist) Mountain Biking: Class 2 and Class 3 E-bikes and any other motorized bicycles (except Class 1 E-bikes) are prohibited.

11. Seasonal Restrictions:

- Mountain Bike trails will be closed to bicycles use during wet times of the year when trail damage can occur. These rules apply to both regular mountain bikes and fat bikes.
- Only non-motorized fat bikes (bikes with tires at least 4" in width) will be allowed on trails when snow-covered.
- Bicyclists will yield to hikers and skiers. Hiking on packed snow trails used for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing is prohibited. Hiking is allowed on the old mine road year-round but winter hikers and snowshoers will be asked to stay to the side of the trail to avoid damaging ski and fat bike tracks. Signage will be placed on the property to educate users on trail etiquette.

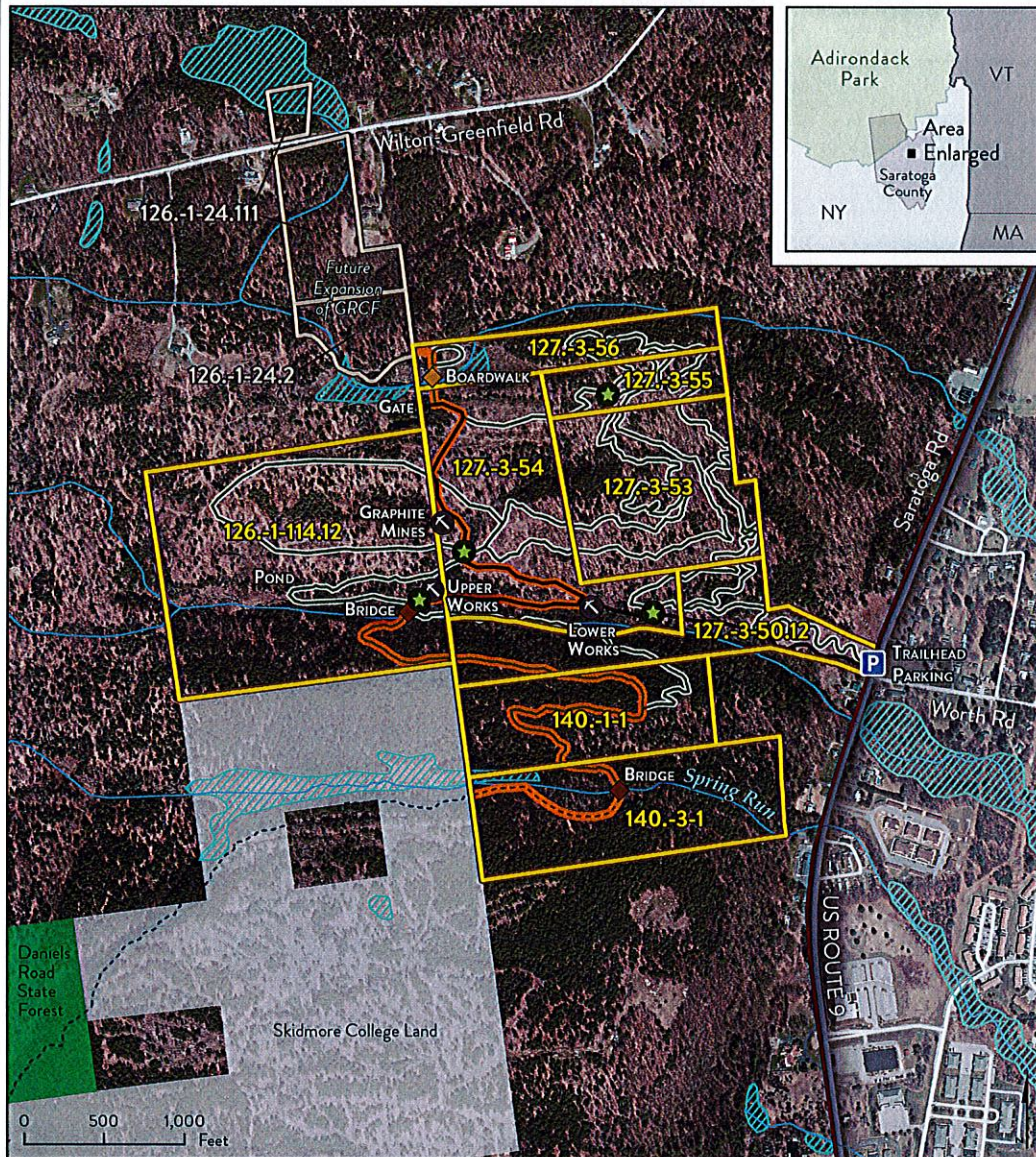
APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY FOREST PROJECT MAPS



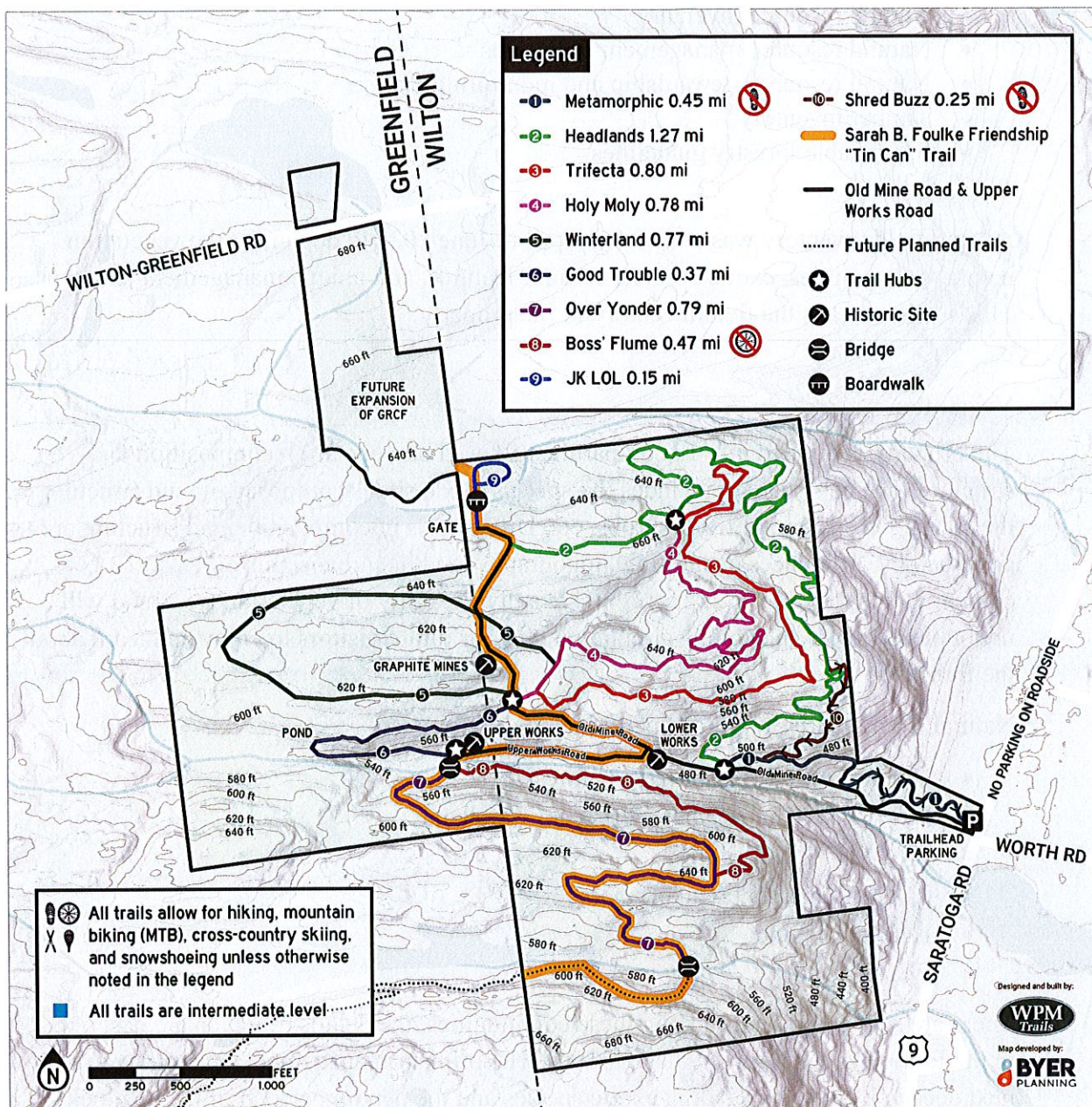


GRAPHITE RANGE COMMUNITY FOREST

Towns of Wilton and Greenfield, Saratoga County, New York | July 2023



- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Graphite Range Community Forest | Wetlands | Trail | Sarah B. Foulke Friendship "Tin Can" Trail |
| Future Expansion of GRCF | State-Protected Land | Old Mine Road & Upper Works Road | |
| Palmerston Focus Area | Trail Hub | Future Planned Trail | |



APPENDIX B – FIELD INVENTORY

- Natural resource inventory
- Natural resource management objectives
- Natural resource stewardship and monitoring plan
- Timber inventory
- Sustainable forestry guidelines

A rapid field inventory was done from April to June 2022 to document the vegetation, natural communities, exotic species, cultural features, and unique management concerns. This section details the field inventory of the property.

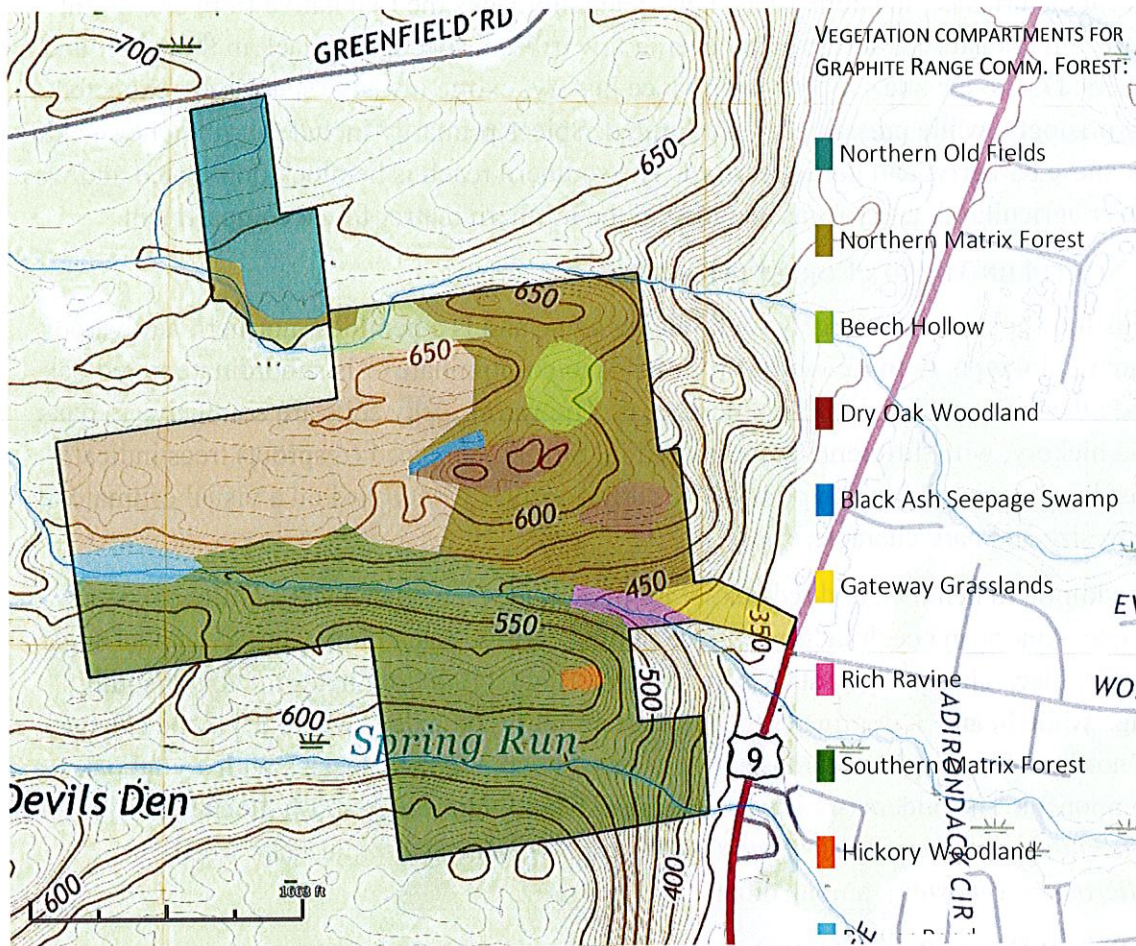
Vegetation

The property is divided into 12 compartments based on vegetation composition and structure. The composition includes the species mix a site is composed of, and structure is the sizing and spacing of trees, shrubs, etc. Differences in composition and structure are governed by differences in substrate, topography, and disturbance history. The 12 compartments found over 222 acres create a diverse array of vegetation types and will undoubtedly foster an exciting circulation plan for future visitors to enjoy and learn about the forest.

Natural Communities on the property include:

- Hemlock–northern hardwoods forest
- Dry oak and hickory hop hornbeam woodland
- Black ash swamp
- Shallow emergent (cattail) marsh
- Hemlock ravine
- Beaver pond

There are subtle variations among these communities, the details of which are described in the following compartment descriptions. The primary management concerns over the next decade include eliminating exotic species and the pending arrival of the hemlock woolly adelgid.



VEGETATION COMPARTMENTS OF THE GRAPHITE RANGE COMMUNITY FOREST: Compartment names listed at right match to colors on the map and follow with detailed descriptions.

Compartment Descriptions

NORTHERN OLD FIELDS (15.5 ACRES)

The ~20-acre northern gateway is mainly composed of old agricultural fields. These are apparent in the 1948 aerial image and on the ground via stone walls and vegetation composition. The land slopes gently to the south, and the soil includes round cobbles from glacial till. These have been heaped into some impressively large stone walls, including approximately 3,500 linear feet. The fields were abandoned in the 1970s.

Vegetation is dominated by old-field white pine. White pine commonly colonizes old agricultural fields, especially in crop production (with exposed soils). Red maple is common, with elm, ash, black birch, and a few yellow birches in wetter areas. A couple of stands of black locust speak to the agricultural history, along with hawthorn. Other species include common juniper, grey birch, grape vines, and Christmas fern. Due to

recent disturbance, the herbaceous layer generally lacks the rich native flora one might expect in undisturbed forests. However, a few trilliums occur with jack in the pulpit and others. Due to the site's recent disturbance history, exotic invasive species are expected. Surprisingly, while present, they are limited. Species primarily include shrub honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, and garlic mustard. The southern reach is hemlock dominated and was never agricultural, and so was included in the northern matrix forest compartment.

NORTHERN MATRIX FOREST (41 ACRES)

This forest occurs on a largely south-facing slope and is a hemlock–northern hardwood community type. In this case, hemlock tends to co-dominate or is subordinate to red oak and other oaks, which dominate most areas. The warm rocky soils are conducive to oaks and hickory, with different species mixed in. Several coppiced (resprout) trees indicate past logging activity which probably occurred around 1900 based on a visual estimate of stem size and bark characteristics.

In addition to hemlock and red oak, other tree species include hickory, white oak, red maple, American beech (at times dense in understory), black birch, and occasional sugar maple, black cherry, Bigtooth aspen, and ash. Black birch dominates the lower/south edge while hemlock dominates the northern property boundary where the slope changes to north-facing. Regeneration is a mix of the abovementioned species with a vital oak component. The understory is generally sparse but includes low-bush blueberry (*Vaccinium* sp.), woodland sedge (*Carex Pennsylvanica*), and rattlesnake weed (*Hieracium venosum*), among others.

BEECH HOLLOW (4.3 ACRES)

This area is part of the matrix forest but is so heavily dominated by American beech it was separated as a distinct compartment. A small topographic hollow favors beech, likely due to a cooler and moister environment, or it may result from past disturbance. Regardless, the area is densely shaded with beech in the canopy and the understory. The ground layer is sparse.

GATEWAY GRASSLAND (4.1 ACRES)

This area fronting U.S. Route 9 is open grassland of native plants and exotic species. The substrate is sand, deposited either by wind or water during postglacial times. Native grasses and exotics occur with scattered raspberry species (*Rubus* spp.), milkweed (*Asclepias* sp.), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus* sp.), bedstraw (*Gallium* sp.), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), strawberry (*Fragaria* sp.), vetch (*Vicia cracca*), sedges (*Carex* sp.), burdock (*Arctium* sp.) among others. (A seasonal perspective of species in this area would be beneficial). Emerging trees include hickory, sugar maple, red oak, sumac, white pine, and aspen. The lower slopes are under the rapid invasion of black locusts—which may not support recreation needs. Planting a few pitch pines, oaks, and serviceberry, among others, would do well here. The peripheries have European buckthorn and exotic

shrub honeysuckle. Native trees and shrubs could be culled on the northern edge to expose the rock outcrops (and bike trails) for aesthetics and wildlife.

RICH RAVINE (2.2 ACRES)

This small pocket where the grassland meets the woods along the main entry trail occurs on the steep slope reaching from the trail down to the stream. The soil here remains mesic and is fertile, as indicated by the herbaceous layer. *This ravine is the only rich flora area identified in the spring 2022 survey.* Overstory trees include sugar maple, bitternut hickory, some basswood, and hophornbeam, all of which indicate a rich northern hardwood community, albeit very small. This small pocket is a rich northern hardwoods community type.

Herbaceous plants, the composition of which further indicates the richness of this site, including wake robin trillium (*Trillium erectum*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), foam flower (*Tiarella cordifolia*), wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*), Solomon's seal (*Polygonatum* sp.), Solomon's plume (*Maianthemum* sp.), violets (*Viola* sp.), Rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*), twisted stalk (*Streptopus* sp.), *Actaea* sp., wide-leaved sedge (*Carex platyphylla*), hog-peanut (*Amphicarpaea bracteata*), Christmas fern (*Polystichum acrostichoides*), wood ferns (*Dryopteris* sp.), sensitive fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), and maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*), among others. Shrubs include maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), witch hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*), and regionally uncommon plants American honeysuckle (*Lonicera canadensis*) and leatherwood (*Dirca palustris*). Forest management should include a rail fence along this main trail section to ensure people drawn to the stream do not venture down the slope, thereby trampling the vegetation. The stream will be a draw, and a defined location to access it should be identified. The diversity and richness of this small site cannot be overstated. Efforts should be made to ensure it is not degraded.

DRY OAK WOODLANDS (7.5 ACRES)

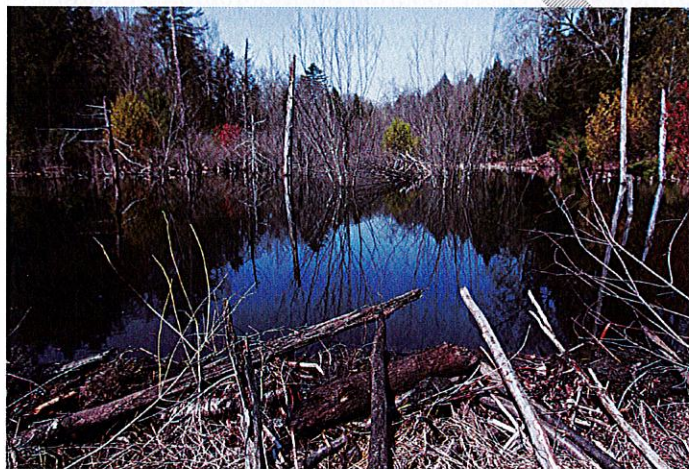
These dry oak woodlands are a drier example of the northern matrix forest. Because of the rockier, steeper, or more exposed site, these sites are more open, with shorter trees, less hemlock, and more sun than the matrix forest. Oaks, including red, black, white, and some chestnut oak, dominate, with species of hickory and hop-hornbeam as subordinate. Hemlock does occur but does not dominate. Serviceberry is present as well. The understory includes abundant low bush blueberry and woodland sedge, with bunchgrasses in the sunny openings. These dry oak communities are uncommon regionally, requiring ledge-like, dry, warm shallow soil conditions. Additional explorations for unique plants are suggested.

SEEPAGE SWAMP (0.8 ACRES)

This small compartment is formed from steep slopes on either side and a small pocket swamp in the depression. The water likely arises from a seep, while drainage is to the southwest based on the topography. A few trees in the center suggest black ash—which of the ash species is the most tolerant of saturation. Other species include yellow birch, American elm, royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*), sensitive fern, cinnamon and marsh fern, *Sphagnum* mosses, and a few hobblebush (*Viburnum lanthanoids*), among others. The group is characteristically northern—an indicator of the cold topographic hollow of this site. In time the ash will probably die from the emerald ash borer.

BEAVER POND (3.3 ACRES)

At the western end of the property is one of the best sites on the GRCF. What was once a shallow wetland, beavers have modified into a pond. In recent years the dam broke during a summer storm draining the pond (and subsequently breaking the human-made dam downstream). Beavers built a new dam in 2022, and a pond has reemerged in the western half. Beaver ponds and meadows go through cyclic periods of ponding and



Beaver Pond

abandonment. The eastern half is an abandoned beaver pond meadow. White pine is common around the margins and is now flooded by the pond. The field survey for this area was done in April, and the meadow was seasonally sparse. The meadow is expected to be rich with sun-loving plants and pollinators. A few exotic shrub honeysuckle plants occur in the meadow. In April 2022, wood ducks

inhabited the pond. The ecological value of this area is high.

SOUTHERN MATRIX FOREST (87.3 ACRES)

The Southern Matrix Forest contains steep slopes leading down to the main ravine and separate drainage of Spring Run farther south. The terrain is rocky and undulating, with numerous exposed ledges. This forest is dominated heavily by eastern hemlock. It is a hemlock–northern hardwoods community, and subordinates include red oak, red maple, yellow birch, black birch, and others. Mature white oak can be found in pockets, and a few twisty ancient chestnut oaks dot the ridge. American beech is the dominant understory tree—its shade tolerance allows it to persist under the dense shade of hemlock, etc. Decayed stumps suggest the last cutting was around 30 years ago. Most of the current trees are about 100 years old. The shrub and ground layers are sparse, typical under the dense

shade of hemlock overstory. Small patches of herbaceous plants include Christmas fern, wood ferns (*Dryopteris* sp.), and wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*). Rare plants include partridgeberry (*Mitchella repens*) and Canada Mayflower



Small Pocket Swamp At Spring Run Headwaters

(*Maianthemum canadense*). A single population of pink lady slipper orchid (*Cypripedium acaule*). A couple of wetter areas along Spring Run contain small wetlands of ferns and shrubs less than 1/10th of an acre.

■ HICKORY WOODLAND (0.7 ACRES)

This very small community occurs on a knob of shallow rocky soils. Stunted hickory trees dominate with a few oaks among the surrounding matrix of hemlock. The understory is sparse but includes woodland sedge, among others. The site would benefit from added sunlight by felling (or girdling) hemlock trees. This hickory woodland is probably more representative of what the ridge top forests were composed of before the spread of hemlock from past land use.

■ 2012 HARVEST AREA (47.9 ACRES)

This compartment occurs on a warm south-facing slope above the beaver pond and generally west of the mines. It was cut heavily in 2012 and is now vigorously

regenerating. Evidence of cutting includes red oak, hemlock, beech, and others. American beech is regenerating vigorously with black birch, hop-hornbeam, and red maple. Oak regeneration is spotty. A pocket near the mines includes robust growth of trembling aspen. Raspberry stems are standard (as they tend to be after disturbance). Exotic plants are occasional in this zone, probably having arrived on logging equipment and adapted to disturbed sites; shrub honeysuckle and multiflora rose were seen in meager numbers. Over the coming decades, new growth will thin out and emerge as a deciduous hardwood forest again. There is still a significant component of hemlock and some oak in the overstory; however, the hemlock will likely fade out by 2040. Evidence of the harvest will last until around 2070, and the site should resemble a proper forest.

EMERGENT MARSH (3.2 ACRES)

In the northern reach of the property adjacent to the 20-acre northern gateway is a shallow emergent marsh in a hollow with a steep face to the south and gentle terrain to the north. The site is dominated by cattails, royal, and sensitive fern, among many others. Speckled alder (*Alnus incana*) occurs around the margins and dominates in the west.

Invasive Exotic Species

Invasive exotic species are the greatest threat to biodiversity after land use change. At the Graphite Range Community Forest, exotic invasive species are, fortunately, limited in their diversity and extent. However, with expected visitation from bicycles and foot traffic, land stewards should remain vigilant; trails will be the primary vector for invading small-seeded exotic species into pristine areas.

In 2022 exotic species occur in five areas, including:

- 1) ALONG THE EDGES OF THE GATEWAY GRASSLANDS near Route 9 and parking: Shrub honeysuckle and European buckthorn can be found along the edges of the grasslands near Route 9. The infestation is light, and these can be easily eradicated. The native tree, black locust, is aggressively invading the grassy field; it will take over if it is not mowed/controlled.
- 2) THE 20 ACRES OF THE NORTHERN OLD FIELDS: Old agricultural fields, because of their disturbed and often enriched soils and the sunny nature before abandonment, are often abundant with exotic weeds. Surprisingly, despite being abandoned as recently as the 1970s, the site is only marginally infested. Shrub honeysuckle, Japanese barberry, and garlic mustard are the primary concerns. However, because this area is a gateway, bicycles and boots will pick up seeds and carry them into the rest of the forest.
- 3) EMERGENT MARSH near the northern gateway: The margins contain the little shrub honeysuckle, and the wetland itself has common invasive reed (*Phragmites* sp.). The former is easy to manage; the latter is more challenging, but the infestation is currently low and could be eradicated.

4) BEAVER POND EDGES: The combination of the drained beaver pond with nearby logging activity (the machinery is a common dispersal agent for weeds) the site was poised for exotic species. There is a limited number of shrub honeysuckle in the old meadow.

5) 2012 HARVEST AREA: Infestations here are very light—hardly worth noting, but because of the recent disturbance, this area should be monitored, so it is included here.

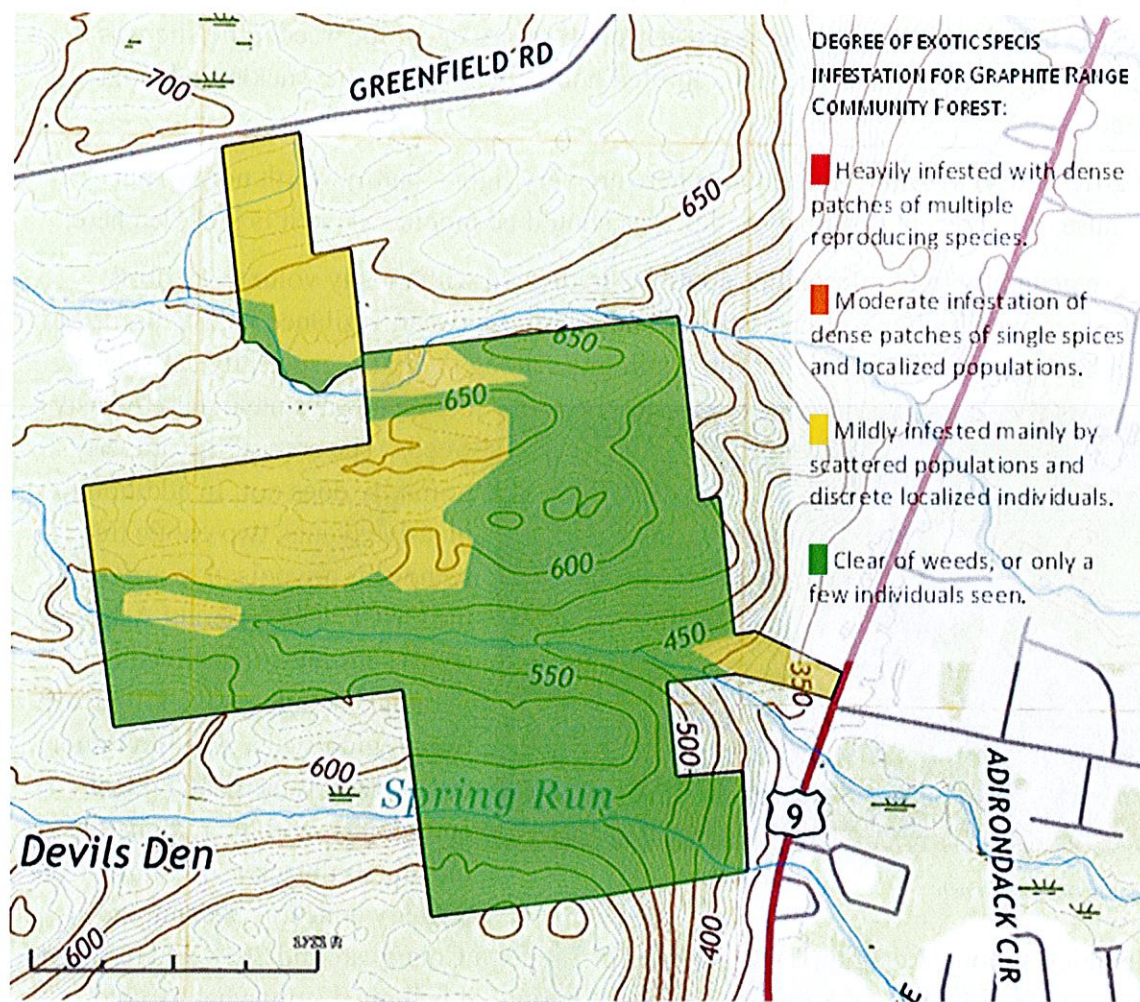
These generally light infestations could be eradicated with mostly volunteer efforts. However, with high use of bicycle tires and hiking footwear, vigilance will be needed to watch for garlic mustard and Japanese stilt grass along the trails, especially considering



Swamp Near Black Ash

both gateways have these invasive weeds. The core of the property primarily does not. In addition to invasive plants, two exotic tree pathogens are poised to arrive to the GRCF. The Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has recently arrived in Saratoga County and is killing ash trees region-wide. Ash is a minor component of the GRCF plant community, and the regionally uncommon black ash swamp is the primary concern. Second, the

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) arrived in Saratoga County around 2018 and has been seen within five miles of Saratoga Springs. Although it is limited somewhat by cold temperature (−20F), the species slowly kills hemlock trees, typically within ten years after arrival. Chemical treatments are available by spraying or injecting trees. While this is practical for small stands or specimen trees, it is impractical for an entire forest. A new beetle biocontrol is available; (see www.treesaverspa.com). The Advisory Committee and the County will need to decide, likely in the next five years, on how to manage the pending arrival of HWA. The hemlocks at the ravine gateway area are probably the highest value trees at GRCF.



Exotic species present at GRCF

Cultural Features

The GRCF property has a long history of land use. While the specific use by Native Americans (see more in Land Use History section below) and the earliest European settlers are unclear, its significance as the source of headwater streams and proximity to settled areas suggests the land was used early on. The primary post-European settlement land uses that provide the most visible cultural evidence human land-use of GRCF include:

- Agricultural use in the 20-acre northern gateway.
- Timber extraction at various times from at least the late 1800s to most recently in 2012.
- Graphite mining from approximately 1908 until the site's closure around 1930.



LOCATIONS OF CULTURAL REMAINS ON THE GRAPHITE RANGE COMMUNITY FOREST: A List Of Selected Locations Is Provided In The Text With Brief Descriptions And Some Photographs.

The map locates the cultural features. The text references follow a brief list of explanations of each site. All of these sites relate to the three land uses above. Other than a few twisted chestnut oaks on the south ridge, there are no old growth areas on the property; the forest is relatively young due to past land use. See Weatherwax (2008) for details on the graphite operation.

Descriptions of selected sites:

Stone walls: In the northern gateway area, these stone walls amount to approximately 3,500 linear feet of wall. The walls include a mix of stone sizes, but most walls contain an abundance of small, fist-sized stones. These walls indicate row crop agriculture (as

opposed to pasture or hay). Some walls are impressive in size—with 6-foot base widths and 4-feet tall. It's an impressive effort that continually cleared the stony fields.

Midden: This area is hard to discern on the ground. It is located near the outlet of the black ash swamp. There is glass, metal, and other fragments of human presence. It is probably associated with the graphite works as perhaps an area where people could be near this outlet of the seepage swamp for cooling off or some other purpose. This assessment is speculation; a historical archeologist could undoubtedly discern more.

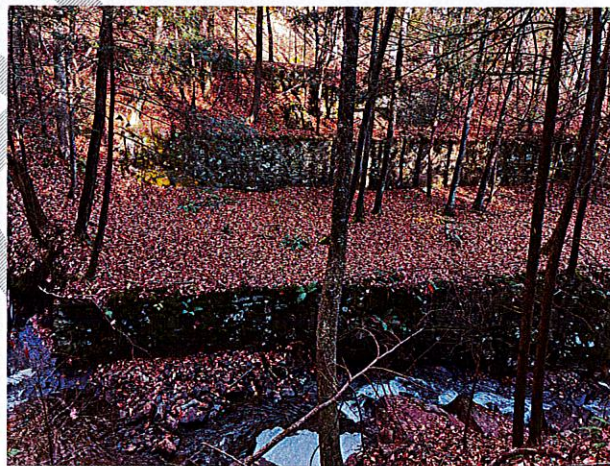
Coppiced woods: Several groves have a high abundance of resprouting (coppiced) trees (primarily oaks). Tree rings can reveal the age of the last cutting; however, a visual estimate suggests the timing corresponds with the graphite period. It might have been wood to supply the graphite operation.

Deep quarry: This vein was worked hard and forms a deep linear pit and tailings mound of about 50 feet now filled with water. Other old quarry sites on the property are smaller, except one slightly off the property in the north, which forms a deep pool.

House/Storage: This is the first site one encounters when approaching from the Gateway Grasslands. There are foundations, concrete, bits of coal, etc., and Weatherwax (2008) indicates it is a "rooming house" and storage area.

Dam: This dam site served the graphite operation. The dam broke in around 2019 during a summer storm. There are wood remains from the dam and stone remains on the south side of the stream.

Lower Works: This is the large, impressive stone construction on the north side of the stream. It has tall stone walls with a central platform. It's unclear how it all functioned. Trees grow on some stonewalls and should be removed.



Lower Graphite Mining Works

Trench (800 feet): This shallow trench occurs at the base of the slope on the south side of the stream. It is unclear what the purpose of this trench was; however, it seems possible it was to catch slope runoff and contain it to the stream above the dam.

Borrow pit: This flat area along the stream was excavated, and the material was presumably repurposed elsewhere, perhaps for the dam or to fill in the Lower Works.



Graphite Mine Drifts

Pipe: A metal pipe occurs far upstream from the main graphite operation. It is unclear what the purpose of this pipe was, but it may have brought clean water down to the works from well above the operations.

Drifts: These are the mines that form a linear series of 12 openings in the face of the outcrop. Each hole is approximately 5 to

10 feet around—the holes all access the same linear "tunnel" interconnectedly.

GEOLOGY AND SOILS

The GRCF has in an interesting geologic setting. Along the Route 9 corridor, the Palmertown Range rises along the western front. At the same time, to the east, the substrate is dominated by glacial sands deposited in a huge glacial lake at the end of the last glacial period, roughly 14,000 years ago. After the lake drained, winds reshaped the sands into dunes. The famed Albany Pine Barrens and the Saratoga Sandplains are composed of similar sands as the foundation of their unique ecological communities. The sands cover lacustrine clays (lakebed sediment), which overlies the shale bedrock that underlies most of southern and eastern Saratoga County.

The geology of the Palmertown Range is somewhat complex, and a complete description is beyond the scope of this plan. The U.S. Geological Survey shows four rock types converging on this parcel of land—somewhat unusual geological diversity for a parcel of 222 acres. These rocks include:

- CANAJOHARIE SHALE: east side of property overlain by sand (does not expose); 440 million-year-old seafloor sediments.
- BIOTITE AND HORNBLEND GRANITE OR GNEISS: Old (~1 billion years) hard crystalline rocks related to Adirondack rocks.
- QUARTZITE, SCHIST, AND GRAPHITIC SCHIST: Old (~1 billion years) metamorphosed sedimentary rocks. It is in these rocks that the graphite deposits occur.

- **UNDIVIDED METASEDIMENTARY ROCK AND RELATED MIGMATITE:** Hard old rocks with undefined geology.

Besides the younger shale that is mostly to the east and offsite, the rocks are metamorphosed, twisted, folded, and thrust up in chaotic ways. The Palmertown Escarpment, where it fronts the Wilton sand plains, is formed by the McGregor Fault. This fault runs from Saratoga Springs to Lake George.

Some of these rocks gave rise to the graphite operation, which appears to have been financially successful along one vein. The property contains other pits that may not have been as productive. Nonetheless, they provide additional intrigue to the property.

The soils that derive from these rocks and postglacial deposition include a mix of specific types. Generally, soils in the property's core are steep, rocky, and shallow. These attributes are apparent from recent trail construction, which unearthed a lot of cobble and bedrock. Specifically, the property contains three soil types according to the USDA Web Soil Survey:

- **WINDSOR LOAMY SAND (WnB):** Occurs close to U.S. Route 9 along the parking area and grassy slope heading up to the forest. Formed as dunes, glacial outwash, etc., and composed primarily of loose sand. Excessively drained.
- **CHATFIELD-HOLLIS COMPLEX 8-15% SLOPES (CeC):** Forms most of the soils north of the main (Snook Kill) stream, including the northern gateway. Described as very stony sandy loam, close to bedrock, and somewhat excessively drained.
- **CHATFIELD-HOLLIS COMPLEX 15-35% SLOPES (CfD):** More or less same as above but steeper slopes and thus more significant runoff. Most of this is south of the main stream valley.

The GRCF soils are generally unsuitable for agriculture. The property was not cleared except for the 20-acre northern gateway area and the opening on the low slope previously used as a golf driving range. The 20-acre northern gateway was farmed but now has a forest. Previous owners may have attempted pasture or hay on the sandy slope near Route 9. However, the soils lack productivity due to low moisture retention. The thin, rocky soil has led to a rich forest, which people have used for at least 150 years.

LAND USE HISTORY

Use of the region goes back some 10,000 years to the indigenous people who inhabited what is now Saratoga County after the retreat of glacial ice and stabilization of the rivers and sediments. These cultures evolved with the landscape over millennia and shaped the vegetation to suit their cultural ecology. Because the property has steep terrain, a lack of productive soils, and no large water body, it is unlikely native groups intensively used what is now GRCF. However, forays for hunting, gathering, minerals and other activities are likely.

The Palmertown area has a rich history rooted in indigenous beginnings. The original inhabitants of the southern Adirondack foothills (Palmertown) were a band of Native Americans who settled at the foot of the Palmertown Mountain range after fleeing from the East after King Phillip's War. King Phillip's War, which occurred from 1675 to 1678, was an attempt to drive the English Settlers out of New England. The Native Americans in this area called themselves the "Palmertown Indians." Which may have informed the name of the area. This name was given to the land now known as the Town of Wilton, which changed when Wilton became officially incorporated as a town in 1818. Its inhabitants shared the common sentiment of their passion and love for the land.

Palmertown was a vast wilderness area until the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, which attracted people to settle in the area. Palmertown was part of the Kayaderosseras Patent, the largest and most important land grant made in Colonial times, which transferred over 406,404 acres of land on November 2, 1708 and was signed by Queen Anne of England. Until this time, natives and soldiers were the only people passing the area, but once the patent was surveyed, lots were divided allowing for people to permanently settle in the area. The majority of land that is part of the Kayaderosseras Patent eventually became Saratoga County. The very first settlers that arrived to Palmertown between the French and Indian War and the American Revolution were the Brisbin brothers in 1764, who began a sawmill operation on the Snook Kill.

Other than timber, the site's primary use was as a graphite mine. Formed in 1908, the Saratoga Graphite Company carried out mine production until ceasing operations sometime between 1920 and 1929. Remains of this endeavor can be found on the landscape today from the drifts (mine openings), races, stone foundations, borrow pits, failed explorations, and more. There is a rich story to share with available archives collected from various volunteer sources - the cultural landscape inventory details the locations and key features. (C. Weatherwax, 2008) provides an excellent summary of the mine's operations).

Except for the 20-acre northern gateway, there is no evidence of agriculture on the property. It is possible cows grazed the woods, and pigs set out to fatten on acorns in the oak-dominated areas. The northern gateway was open agricultural land into the 1970s. The oak forest in the property's core contains pockets of heavily coppiced trees—trees that have been cut and resprouted and today have two, three, or more trunks. These trees indicate the harvest of small diameter wood probably during the graphite period. Over the past century, much of the forest has turned to hemlock. Aside from a few slow-growing chestnut oaks that might reach 200 years, few trees on the property surpass 125 years. It is likely that before European settlement, the forest was oak dominated by hemlock and probably a significant component of American chestnut.

The dominance of hemlock today is perhaps a recent phenomenon resulting from past disturbances.

In the 1990s, the lower grass slope along U.S. Route 9 was used as a golf driving range. In recent decades the land has been used periodically by pedestrians to see the mines and ruins. Portions have been harvested for timber; in 2012, about 45 acres were heavily harvested. Except for the 2012 cutting and the 20-acre northern gateway, there is no evidence of timber activity from the past 30 years.

The Cultural Inventory section details the legacy of land use history on the property, focusing primarily on the northern gateway and the graphite operations. Many of the property's features provide excellent historical interpretation and education opportunities.



1948 AERIAL PHOTO OF THE 222-ACRE GRAPHITE RANGE COMMUNITY FOREST: Even within 20 years after the cessation of graphite operations the property is almost entirely forested. Exceptions include the 20-acre northern gateway which was agricultural, a small section along the main stream near the mine operations, and a small piece along Route 9. What is today the grassy hill is forested in 1948.

APPENDIX C – FOREST ASSESSMENT

Graphite Range Community Forest Assessment Summary

Winter 2021

Rich McDermott, Forester

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

This property has been broken up into three areas for this summary. Due to a large wetland, we did not visit area 3 yet, which will need to be accessed from Greenfield Road in the future until a crossing is established. No threatened or endangered species were found on the property from a search of the natural heritage database. Access to areas 1 and 2 is from Rt 9 across from Worth Road in the town of Wilton. Access to area 3 will be from Wilton-Greenfield Road. The roads present on the property are in excellent shape currently. There is a beautiful stream on the southern section of the property.

Area 1

This area is about 113 acres and was harvested aggressively in the past, resulting in excellent regeneration (new trees). In most cases, the regeneration that has been established is over the deer's feeding level. The species of saplings found were black birch (majority), beech (heavy in some pockets but not an issue overall), aspen, red oak, chestnut oak, hemlock, white pine, witch hazel, yellow birch, red maple, sugar maple, white ash, striped maple, hickory, and white oak.

Pockets of retention trees were left throughout the harvest area resulting in the same species as saplings but with much larger diameter (12" + diameter at breast height) and much taller. This mix of saplings and small saw timber size trees results in an excellent vertical structure in many places throughout this area. Birds were using the young forest areas much heavier than the pure hemlock stand (area 2) while looking at the property. There is beech bark disease on larger beech (widespread, nothing new), minor sugar maple borer damage on a few sugar maple but very minor. The larger oak throughout the property did not have Gypsy Moth Egg Masses at this time (I looked hard). This fact was not easy to believe since there are thousands of egg masses close by on Daniels Road State Forest. I do not know what would cause such a difference in egg mass population, but they were not there then.

Another surprising thing to believe was this property's lack of invasive species. We only encountered two honeysuckle plants in a little over 4.5 miles of the property. As the trees get bigger over time and the canopy closes, I suspect there will be even less chance of invasive species since most require vast sunlight to thrive. **You may want to ensure the trail contractor cleans off equipment before entering since they could easily vector in trouble.** Keep in mind that we did not do a specific inventory looking for invasive plants, so there could be more out there, but not finding them on trails was terrific in this area. You could keep them out at the present level with volunteers each year and the help

of the Mohawk Prism ID'ing and advising on removal. This possibility is genuinely extraordinary!!

At this time, I suggest letting these saplings continue to grow and fight for resources. Being so close together will force the trees to get tall so they can reach the sunlight, keep them relatively straight, and throw their lower branches as they become shaded out due to crowding. I suggest keeping a future harvest possibility open as these trees get bigger. Some ash will end up being killed by Emerald Ash Borer in the future, but ash is a minor component of this forest and will make excellent cavity trees and snags once attacked by EAB. I would also suggest leaving any dead or dying trees that are not a hazard to recreational use. These are magnets for wildlife to use standing and when on the ground.

One open area in the harvest area may have been used as a landing. I suggest having a plan to keep this area open and make it a little larger using volunteers while the trees are plenty small enough to be removed by hand with a saw or loppers. Mowing once a year would do it. This opening would provide food for many birds using the area, especially during breeding. I think the larger entrance near the road should also be kept free of trees.

This area would be an excellent place to bring older elementary- high school students to show how trees need vast sunlight to regenerate. You can also see how different light levels promote different species since some need more sun than others. Users have the opportunity to watch the trees grow over the years and get a chance to see just how many trees come in when larger trees are removed. They would also see how many trees will die for a few trees to get large (this often blows people's minds). Comparing this area to Hemlock Area 2 would be eye-opening for many since Area 2 is a closed canopy in which the trees are growing at a much slower rate, have nothing in the understory, and much less sign of wildlife using, including fewer ticks. This area has education written all over it for trees, wetlands, wildlife use, and habitat.

Area 2

This area is about 87 acres, and most trees are hemlock in the 12" + diameter range. A few maple, oak, yellow birch, beech, and ash were scattered at lower levels. A few trees were looked at for hemlock wooly adelgid, but this was not a survey. Though no HWA was observed then, a much more intensive survey may want to be done (Mohawk Prism may be willing and able) just for planning purposes for salvage, treatment (spraying stem or injection), or to know where you stand. Once infested, heavy trees will die in large numbers, and hardwoods will seed in where the hemlock was. Treatment and biological release may be possible in the future to keep hemlock on this property. There may be no HWA at this time, but some sort of monitoring yearly would be wise. If caught at an early stage, it can be treated with success.

The canopy is closed throughout this area (treetops are touching each other, creating vast shade under trees). As a result, walking through this area is wonderful; the temperature is cooler on a hot day, and the snow level is much less in winter. This area provides thermal cover to various wildlife throughout the winter and shade in summer. The hemlock is keeping the stream cooler all summer also. This area did not have any invasive plants observed, which was not unexpected since the canopy has been closed for some time,

keeping heavy shade on the forest floor, deterring sun-loving invasive plants. As with Area 1, this area has education written all over it compared to area 1, along with the different species using this area or not using it.

At this time, I suggest only having a Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) survey done here to see where it may be. If found, decisions could be made from the information. I strongly recommend leaving an option to harvest open in case HWA is in there (it will be at some point). It is necessary to make some patch cuts to get sun-loving hardwoods started or to thin the hemlocks a little to increase vigor (they tip over easily, so need to go conservative) so that they can live for decades with HWA. This effort would give more time for a biological to get established. The hemlock would remain on the landscape if the thinned trees were also treated. This action should only be done if HWA was found there (I have no idea if it is or not but around you). I suggest having a trail through this area since it is so wonderful. Hugging 20-inch hemlock takes all your worries away (for a few minutes anyway), and I am sure the trees appreciate it very much.

Area 3

This area is about 18 acres. There is room for a parking area in the future if desired. This area has small saw timber trees (12" + diameter at breast height). The entire area was harvested in the past but not to the extent of area 1. The northern region (near the road) consists of a couple of acres of white pine in the small-medium saw timber size class (12" -16" diameter). The trees looked reasonably well. The crowns (tops) were starting to close in on each other. In the past, the white pine weevil hit some trees, resulting in multiple stemmed trees. This fact is not a health issue since the pines recovered well, grew tremendously, and only became an issue for wood products.

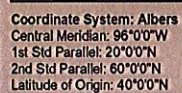
Some white pines showed symptoms of White Pine Needle Disease (WPND), which caused the trees to drop all needles except for that year's growth. These are four fungal diseases hitting the tree at once. This disease is relatively new but has not caused mortality on pine so far. It does cause the growth rate (both diameter and vertical growth) to be reduced due to the tree needing to work harder to photosynthesis because they have fewer needles. The cure is opening up the crowns of the trees to more airflow to reduce the chance of the fungus being able to establish due to less moisture for the fungus to establish. This cure is done by harvesting the trees around the pine trees with the best needle retention. This year was exceptionally wet, so I see it even in wide-open pine trees. I suggest monitoring the trees in the future and leaving an option to harvest open in case crowns close and crowns become very thin with needles or mortality happens. Once opened to airflow, the trees often increase the production of needles and continue with vertical growth. The white pine trees found were generally too large and tall to open up too much, or they could blow over. However, seeing very thin crowns would be worth trying in the future. I have a 22-acre low-density treatment at Boyhaven Scout Camp (soon to become part of Middle Grove State Forest) in Greenfield with sizeable white pine, so we will see if they stay up or blow over (treated April 2021).

South of white pines, the forest changes to hardwoods. A good diversity of species found include red oak, aspen, beech, white ash, black cherry, black birch, yellow birch, paper birch, beech, red maple, sugar maple, basswood, and a few hemlocks (not hardwood and minor component). The quality of the trees varied from excellent to poor, as expected.

The white ash will probably be hit by EAB (emerald ash borer) in the future but will make ideal cavity trees and coarse woody debris as they fall to the ground. The beech has Beech Bark Disease, which is common throughout the Northeast. The few hemlocks could be looked at for HWA if area 3 were being surveyed in the future. Other species will need to be monitored for other forest health insects and diseases as they are discovered. Some invasive honeysuckle was found mainly in the eastern section of the property, where more sunlight was getting down to the forest floor. As the trees get bigger and the crowns close in, the honeysuckle will slowly fall out due to lack of sunlight. As with Area 1, a few volunteers could remove this sooner if desired in a few hours. As with the other areas on the property, this area would be fantastic for educational purposes since it is a view of stand 1 in another 20-30 years. The crossing to area 1 looks realistic with a bit of bog bridging (looking from Area 3 to south anyway).

This property is set up for recreation, education, and history. As an educator of forest management, it is perfect right now for showing many things. This property has good tree diversity, which will be important as tree-specific diseases and insects are discovered. It also has excellent access (which will only get better), enabling people to get far enough away from urban noises to have health benefits and give people exercise without feeling like exercise. It will unite people to help maintain the forest and get dirty for decades. I think the place is **awesome** (I say that about every forest), but having the community involved will push it even higher off the charts. The opportunities are endless!

DRAFT



APPENDIX D – FIVE-YEAR STRATEGY

This section provides information on current goals for the first five years with the intent that it will undoubtedly need to be modified and updated, as we learn more about managing the community forest and balancing its needs with stewardship capacity. It is the intent of the GRCF Management Plan, consistent with the Stewardship Agreement, that the Designated Land Steward shall submit an annual program plan for County approval.

Year One (acquisition plus one year)

The goal of the GRCF Advisory Committee is to work with the Designated Land Steward complete many of the Year One actions before the formal acquisition of the first parcel of the property. However, these items are included to ensure all stakeholders are aware.

Site Development:

- Develop Route 9 Parking Lot (designed contracted with build in spring 2023).
- Establish parking and traffic control measures (spring 2023).
- Complete Phase 1 trail work (90% complete).
- Develop Logo and other branding materials (summer 2023).
- Create signage and trail markers (summer 2023).
- Create trailhead and entry kiosk (summer 2023)
- Mark boundaries with logo signage (summer 2023).
- Collaborate with Skidmore College on trail connections (summer 2023).
- Install fencing and other exclusion barriers to protect historical and natural sites (summer 2023).
- Develop formal volunteer program with Designated Land Steward
- Formalize trail maintenance agreements with local organizations (such as Saratoga Mountain Biking Assn., Adirondack Mountain Club, etc.)
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with member organizations and specialized volunteers to develop invasive species surveys and removal events for users and volunteers focusing on Japanese knotweed and the edges of the grass slope (2023\24)
- Explore opportunities to collaborate with member organizations and specialized volunteers to develop baseline data of existing bird and mammal populations. (2024).

General:

- Expand community outreach.
- Explore opportunities for guided educational hikes and educational programs with member organizations and specialized volunteers.
- Explore opportunities for schools and children's groups to develop children's programming.
- Explore opportunities for collaborations with local hiking and mountain biking organizations.

- Determine process for evaluating trail expansion opportunities as well as recreational/outdoor sporting events suitable to site and parking.

Year Two (acquisition plus two years)

The goal of the GRCF Management Plan is to complete many of the Year Two actions on the Northern Gateway parcel before the formal acquisition of the property. However, these items are included to ensure all stakeholders are aware.

Site Development:

- Develop Northern Gateway parcels, including parking lot and trails.
- Build additional infrastructure such as bridges for water and wetland crossings.
- Evaluate trail usage and impacts and consider alterations or alternatives to allowed uses, and consider onsite flow patterns such as bike directions, etc.
- Plan for trail expansion and improvements or possible alteration to existing trails if there is a demonstrated need and the impact on natural resources and wildlife habitat is minimal or significantly adverse.
- Improve trail and property maintenance with volunteer stewards and assistance from recreation groups.
- Host invasive species removal events focusing on monitoring forest health, grasslands, and northern gateway.

General:

- Encourage educational hikes and programs for adults and children.
- Continue bird and mammal inventory data.
- Evaluate the creation of mindfulness stations.
- Analyze and interpret usage data from Year One and adjust programs/usage accordingly.

Year Three (acquisition plus three years)

The two-year stewardship agreement between Saratoga PLAN & Saratoga County will expire at the end of year Two. A determination will be needed at that time on whether to amend or extend the Stewardship Agreement with Saratoga PLAN, re-assign it to an alternative Designated Land Steward or if the County and Advisory Committee can work directly with one another to manage the GRCF without an intermediary Designated Land Steward.

Site Development:

- Evaluate the creation of rustic/natural strength training stations.
- Evaluate the creation of a permanent restroom facility.
- Plan for trail expansion and improvements to existing trails if there is a demonstrated need and the impact on natural resources and wildlife habitat is minimal or significantly adverse.

General:

- Expand and improve educational hikes and children's programming.
- Continuing bird and mammal inventory data
- Analyze and interpret usage data from Year Two and adjust programs/usage accordingly.

Year Four (acquisition plus four years)

Site Development:

- Explore acquisition of adjacent lands.
- Plan for trail expansion and improvements to existing trails if there is a demonstrated need and the impact on natural resources and wildlife habitat is minimal or significantly adverse.

General:

- Continuing bird and mammal inventory data
- Analyze and interpret usage data from Year Three and adjust programs/usage accordingly.

Year Five (acquisition plus five years)

Site Development:

- Evaluate performance since inception.
- Update and revise the GRCF Management Plan.

General:

- Continue bird and mammal inventory data.
- Analyze and interpret usage data from Year Four and adjust programs/usage accordingly.

APPENDIX E – RECOMMENDED READING FOR ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND INTERESTED COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Saratoga PLAN Graphite Range Community Forest:

<https://saratogaplan.org/saratoga-county-community-forest/>

***Southern Palmertown Conservation and Recreation Strategy*, Alta Planning for Open Space Institute and Saratoga PLAN, October 2018:**

<https://www.openspaceinstitute.org/places/palmertown-range>.

Article: Groups Secure Grant to Create Saratoga County’s First Publicly-Owned Community Forest:

<https://www.openspaceinstitute.org/news/groups-secure-grant-to-create-saratoga-countys-first-publicly-owned-community-forest>

Sarah B Folke Friendship Trails Master Plan: Summary Report for the Southern Palmertown Range, Penn Trails LLC for Palmertown Guidance Committee, July 2021: https://saratogaplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/SBFFT_MasterPlanSummaryReport_Draft_070221.pdf.

U.S. Forest Community Forest Program:

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/community-forest>

Graphite Products Corporation (Graphite Mining/Processing Operation Wilton/Greenfield, New York), C. Weatherwax:

<http://nec-sia.org/pdf/2008%20Graphite%20products%20NY.pdf>

Forest Stewardship Program National Standards and Guidelines:

https://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/library/fsp_standards_guidelines.pdf

Saratoga County Community Forest Application to the Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program dated January 11, 2021

[Request from Saratoga PLAN](#)

APPENDIX F – BRIEF HISTORY OF MINING OPERATIONS ON THE GRCF

The geology of the Adirondacks and the foothills were a source of rich mineral content and mining that is integral to the history of the GRCF. The Mt. McGregor faultline runs along Palمرتown Range foothills, allowing water to draw minerals from deep in the Earth.

Graphite was discovered in the area in the 1840s and minimally mined until the turn of the century when the demand for dry lubricants used in manufacturing began. The Saratoga Graphite Co. operated a mine and milling plant in 1908. In 1915, the Graphite Products Corp. expanded its operation and opened the primary mine, using a sizeable steam-powered milling plant. The mine employed upwards of 100 men; most lived in a boarding house on the property. The mines consisted of giant arched openings called "drifts" and a large open pit mine.



Lower Works of Graphite Mine

The ore was transported by mining cars on narrow gauge tracks. The final product was transported to Saratoga Springs for marketing worldwide. The Wilton mine closed in 1922 due to the discovery of superior deposits in India, Ceylon, and Madagascar. Many of the foundations and mine remnants are still visible at the Graphite Range Community Forest today.

APPENDIX G – NAMED LEGACY STRUCTURES AND FEATURES AT GRCF

Prior to transfer of GRCF ownership to Saratoga County, private donors had provided funding for kiosks, bridges, signs, and other site improvements with the expectation that a specific improvement would be named in honor or memory of someone. These features will retain the names of donors for the lifespan of the named improvement.

Site Improvement	Donor's Name Associated with Improvement
Wooden bridge over southernmost tributary of the Snook Kill	Christopher P. Dailey
Stone bridge over Spring Run	Douglas H. Ward
Northern Gateway Trailhead (Wilton-Greenfield Road Gateway) with kiosk	Alfred Z. Solomon
Interpretive Sign at Mines	Julia S. Stokes

APPENDIX H – GRCF STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT (Appendix H will be updated when the Stewardship Agreement is finalized and signed at closing)

THIS STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENT ("Agreement") made this _____ day of _____, 2023, BY AND BETWEEN,

COUNTY OF SARATOGA, a municipal corporation duly organized under the laws of the State of New York, with offices at 40 McMaster Street, Ballston Spa, New York, 12020, ("COUNTY"),

and-

SARATOGA PLAN, a private nonprofit conservation organization organized under the laws of New York State with a place of business at 112 Spring Street, Room 202, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 ("PLAN"),

COUNTY and PLAN are collectively referred to in this Agreement as the "Parties" and are individually referred to as a "Party."

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the COUNTY recently purchased approximately two hundred two (202) acres of land in eight (8) contiguous parcels located within the towns of Wilton and Greenfield and is in the process of acquiring twenty (20) adjacent acres in two contiguous parcels in the Town of Greenfield, for a total of two hundred twenty-two (222) acres in ten (10) contiguous parcels ("Property"), more commonly known and referred to as the *Graphite Range Community Forest* ("GRCF"), that is part of the broader Palmertown Range conservation initiative, and is more fully depicted and described on the map attached hereto as Appendix A; and

WHEREAS, funding for the acquisition of the Property was in part through the *Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program* ("Community Forest Program" or "CFP") as authorized by Section 7A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act (CFAA) of 1978, and as more fully set forth in Grant 21-DG-11094200-168 ("Grant") between the COUNTY and the United States Department of Agriculture ("USDA") through its *Forest Service State and Private Forestry, Region 9 Office*; and

WHEREAS, the Grant requires the COUNTY to adopt a *Community Forest Plan* that is developed with community involvement that guides the management and use of the GRCF, a copy of which is attached hereto and incorporated herein as Appendix D; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 379-2022, the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors approved the *Community Forest Plan* for the GRCF; and;

WHEREAS, to effectively manage and maintain the GRCF, the COUNTY acknowledges the need for assistance of outside conservation organizations with expertise in the administration and management of open spaces, community forests, and land stewardship by volunteers; and

WHEREAS, PLAN is a small community-based not-for-profit conservation organization dedicated to preserving the rural character, natural habitats and scenic beauty of Saratoga County's irreplaceable assets so that they are accessible to all and survive for future generations; and

WHEREAS, PLAN has agreed to assist the COUNTY by accepting certain duties, obligations, and responsibilities for the maintenance and management of the Property for the term of this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Parties agree that the GRCF is to be a community-managed open space property in the spirit of community forests and the Parties share the goal of establishing and fostering a volunteer advisory committee to assist PLAN and the County with management of the property; and

NOW, THEREFORE, for and in consideration of the facts above recited and the mutual terms, conditions, covenants, and restrictions contained herein, the Parties agree that:

1. TERM and RENEWAL.

1.1 *Term.* The term of this Agreement is two (2) years beginning on [MONTH][DAY], 2023 and ending on [MONTH][DAY], 2025 unless terminated sooner in accordance with section 10.7 ("Termination"), herein.

1.2 *Renewal.* The parties may extend the term of this Agreement by separate written instrument for an additional two terms of one (1) year each.

2. PURPOSE.

2.1 *Purpose.* PLAN, in coordination with the COUNTY, hereby agrees to maintain and manage the Property subject to this Agreement and in accordance with the approved *Community Forest Plan* for the Property. In maintaining and managing the Property, PLAN agrees to use the Property for the following purposes:

2.1.1. Forest management to conserve biodiversity and sustain ecosystem function, and provide appreciation for protection of wildlife and cultural resources for current and future generations;

2.1.2. Providing a diverse set of outdoor recreational opportunities to members of the general public and enable access to green space for the Saratoga County community;

2.1.3. Fostering public education and interpretation of natural and human/cultural history; and

2.1.4. Promoting open space conservation and accessible outdoor activities to accommodate regional population growth and rising interest in and demand for outdoor recreation.

3. OBLIGATIONS.

3.1 *PLAN Obligations.* PLAN is obligated to:

PLAN shall provide five hundred twenty (520) hours of professional staff time annually to coordinate and oversee routine maintenance to the Property and public uses of the Property. PLAN shall provide the following services:

3.1.1.1 Volunteers, Interns, Contractors, and Partners. PLAN shall ensure communication, planning, coordination, training, oversight, and management for all volunteers, interns, contractors, and public and private partners assisting with maintenance of the Property and uses of the Property by the public. All persons and entities assisting PLAN with sanctioned maintenance of the Property shall be considered part of PLAN for purposes of this Agreement.

3.1.1.2 Trails. PLAN shall maintain all trails in a reasonably safe and operable condition and perform routine maintenance to remove debris, downed trees, brush, or anything that would interfere or inhibit the safe passage or the use of any trail on the Property in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan*. Normally encountered trail conditions within the treadway, including but not limited to, stones, gullies, and puddles, will not be considered unreasonably safe nor inoperable conditions.

3.1.1.3 Structures. PLAN is authorized to maintain in a safe and operable condition, in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan*, all structures,

including but not limited to, bridges, boardwalks and bog bridging, fencing, barriers, kiosks, and storage facilities. PLAN shall not be responsible for replacing structures whose maintenance requirements exceed routine repairs.

3.1.1.4 Signs, Kiosks, and Static Displays. PLAN is authorized to maintain all signs, kiosks, and static displays erected on the Property.

3.1.1.5 Parking Areas and Access Roads. PLAN is authorized to maintain all parking areas and access roads in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan*, with the exception of snowplowing and brush hogging which shall remain COUNTY obligations.

- 3.1.2 Manage Access. Subject to the reserved rights of the Remillard family in that warranty deed dated December 20, 2016 and recorded in the Saratoga County Clerk's Office as Instrument #2016040954, PLAN is authorized to manage access to the Property in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan* and provide operational control over the access points to the Property. PLAN shall, at all times, make the Property available for public use on fair and reasonable terms and conditions without unjust discrimination to any public user.
- 3.1.3 Inspect the Property. PLAN shall make periodic inspections of the Property to remove or remediate known hazardous and dangerous conditions, and to act within a reasonable period of time to rectify said conditions. PLAN is also responsible for taking action to limit or stop access to those areas with unsafe conditions until such time that the hazardous and dangerous conditions can be addressed. PLAN shall also have an ongoing obligation to maintain any controls or barriers that have been erected to limit or stop public access to the hazardous dangerous conditions.
- 3.1.4 Reporting to COUNTY. PLAN shall report any hazardous or dangerous conditions that are beyond what can be rectified by ordinary maintenance or any other public safety issue to the appropriate COUNTY designee identified by the COUNTY within forty-eight (48) hours of PLAN's knowledge of the hazardous or dangerous conditions. PLAN shall also report to the COUNTY any incident that resulted in injury or harm to an individual or individuals, or pet, and shall report any damage to the Property.
- 3.1.5 Cooperation and Assistance. PLAN shall cooperate with the COUNTY in response to emergency situations within the Property. PLAN shall provide content and updates to the COUNTY public relations personnel on a periodic basis for website and social media postings, press releases, maps, and all other communications related to the Property and its uses. PLAN agrees to cooperate with the COUNTY in its obligation to submit annual program reports to the USDA, Forest Service State and Private Forestry, Region 9, including, but not limited to, financial status reports, and program performance reports. PLAN shall provide annual plans, updates and reports to the appropriate COUN designee

pursuant to the COUNTY requested timeframe.

3.2 *COUNTY Obligations.* The COUNTY is obligated to:

3.2.1 *Provide Stewardship Payments.* Subject to availability of funds and approval by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, the COUNTY shall submit an annual budget request up to Twenty-Five Thousand (\$25,000.00) Dollars to be used towards the stewardship and management of the Property by PLAN. The initial payment shall be calculated on a prorated basis for the balance of the calendar year and due to PLAN on the start date of this Agreement and in full by January 1st of each successive year this Agreement is in effect. COUNTY shall notify PLAN by December 1st each year before the following fiscal year if it intends to continue this Agreement and the budget request has been approved by the Board of Supervisors. Notwithstanding the above, nothing contained in this section shall create any obligation on behalf of the COUNTY to provide funding towards the stewardship and management of the Property.

3.2.2 *Notice of Federal or State Obligations.* COUNTY shall notify PLAN within a reasonable period of time of any change that is necessary resulting from a requirement or condition imposed upon the COUNTY in accordance with sections 4.2.2 and 10.5 of this Agreement.

3.2.3 *No Duty to Maintain or Repair.* The COUNTY shall have no duty or obligation to make routine repairs or to maintain the Property, all of which shall be the responsibility of PLAN, with the exception of snowplowing the parking areas and occasional brush hogging as needed. COUNTY shall assist PLAN with extraordinary, non-routine maintenance and repairs, such as a major blowdown or a completely washed out bridge or boardwalk.

3.2.4 *Communications.* COUNTY agrees to maintain a page on its website for the GRCF, including a trail map and allowed uses, and to cooperate with PLAN to produce timely communications related to the public's uses of the Property.

4. **PERMITTED USES and RESERVED RIGHTS.**

4.1 *Permitted Uses.* All actions taken by PLAN on the Property shall be in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan* and the annual program plan submitted to and in coordination with the COUNTY. Permitted uses on the Property include, but are not limited to:

4.1.1 *Trail System.* Development, construction, maintenance, improvement, brushing, and grooming of all trails, and all other actions necessary for public access to, and use of, the recreational trail system within the Property.

4.1.2 *Access Structures.* PLAN is authorized to construct and maintain structures to facilitate the public's use of the recreational trail system within the

Property, including any parking areas or access roads, trail bridges, fencing, orientation kiosks, interpretive signage, wayfinding or directional signage, entry signs, and maps.

4.1.3 Tree Maintenance. PLAN is authorized to clear trees and perform brushing when trees or vegetation (a) have fallen or are growing into or directly within existing trails; (b) have fallen on or are at risk of falling on any structures on the Property; or (c) pose a threat to the safety of the public. PLAN shall not be responsible for tree maintenance that exceeds its capacity or expertise, and professional arborists may be contracted for extraordinary tree maintenance that exceeds PLAN's expertise or professional or financial capacity.

4.1.4 PLAN is authorized to conduct forest management activities, including but not limited to, invasive species management, diseases, pests, overbrowse, blowdowns, species composition, and regeneration within the Property in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan*. Any forest management activities not contained within the *Community Forest Plan* shall be subject to COUNTY approval.

4.1.5 Educational Programs. PLAN is authorized to develop educational and interpretive programs for the public related to the GRCF.

4.1.6 Private Events. Upon receipt of a COUNTY-issued permit, PLAN may conduct a variety of special events on the property which promote community and educational purposes. In addition, the Parties acknowledge that these special events could be used for fundraising purposes to assist PLAN in the stewardship of the Property. As part of the annual plan submitted to the COUNTY, PLAN shall provide a schedule of planned special events for the following year. PLAN may also conduct special events in coordination with or for outside organizations when said special events serve a purpose related to the GRCF, and PLAN agrees to be solely responsible to the COUNTY for all actions of any outside organization. PLAN shall be responsible for obtaining any permit or approval required under any applicable town and/or county law or regulation, and to secure adequate proof of insurance from the outside organization. Any fundraising event held at the Property shall be for the benefit of the GRCF.

4.1.7 PLAN may seek donations, event revenue, and grants, including COUNTY funds, to pay for the cost of maintaining or replacing trails, structures, fencing, signs, kiosks, parking areas, access roads, porta-potties, and other improvements, amenities and/or special programs within the Property. Ninety percent (90%) of grants or funds raised by PLAN for the GRCF shall be used on the Property for improvements or programming, with the balance of ten percent (10%) to be retained by PLAN for its fundraising, grant writing efforts, donor relations, communications, database management, bookkeeping, accounting, event planning, and other fiscal management and tracking requirements for grants and donations.

4.2 *Reserved Rights.* The COUNTY reserves the following rights:

4.2.1 Access for inspecting the property. During any reasonable time after the commencement of this Agreement, COUNTY and/or its employees, contractors, subcontractors, and agents reserve the right to enter upon the Property to inspect same.

4.2.2 Amending this Agreement. Notwithstanding the limitations imposed by the provisions of section 10.6 of this Agreement, and consistent with sections 3.2.2 and 10.5 of this Agreement, the COUNTY shall have the unilateral right and authority to amend, change, or alter provisions of this Agreement due to a requirement or condition imposed upon the COUNTY, due to the COUNTY's acceptance of federal and/or state funds to develop and maintain the Property, or any future rule or regulation imposed by the USDA, Forest Service State and Private Forestry - Region 9, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and any other governmental authority having jurisdiction over the conduct or operations at the Property, provided such amendments or changes were pursuant to the above-mentioned requirement or condition imposed upon COUNTY by such governmental authorities.

5. **TEMPORARY CLOSURE OF TRAILS**

5.1 *Trail Closure.* The COUNTY and PLAN shall each have the right to temporarily close any of the trails available to the public when conditions are such that having the public on the trails may present an immediate danger to the life or safety of individuals, or present conditions that result in concerns with using the trails for public recreational access. In each instance, the party which closes the trail shall notify the other in writing within 24 hours of such closure and shall take immediate steps to repair the closed trails or hazardous condition to ensure that the trails are closed to the public for the shortest time possible.

6. **INFORMATIONAL SIGNS and KIOSKS.**

6.1 *Signs.* Provided adequate funding is available, PLAN shall place at least one County-approved sign at each entrance to the Property which indicates that the Property is owned by the COUNTY and is a public outdoor recreation area that was funded in part by the COUNTY and the U.S. Forest Service through the Community Forest Program. PLAN shall have the right to place further County-approved informational and directional signs on the Property as detailed in the *Community Forest Plan*. PLAN shall comply with any sign requirements under local or state law, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

6.2 *Kiosks.* PLAN shall have the right to erect kiosks within the Property in accordance with the *Community Forest Plan* and subject to approval by the COUNTY.

7. HOLD HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFICATION.

- 7.1 *PLAN'S Negligence.* Subject to the policy limits in Section 8.1 below, PLAN agrees to indemnify and save harmless the COUNTY against all claims, losses, damages, and expenses the COUNTY may suffer as a direct result of PLAN's negligence in the course of exercising any action or activity within the Property. This duty to indemnify and save harmless shall extend to the negligent acts of any person employed by PLAN, including its contractors, agents, assigns, volunteers, or any person directly or indirectly employed by them while engaged in any action or activity on the Property. This clause shall not be construed to limit, or otherwise impair, other rights or obligations of indemnity which exist in law, or in equity, for the benefit of the COUNTY.
- 7.2 *COUNTY's Negligence.* The COUNTY agrees to indemnify and save harmless PLAN against all claims, losses, damages and expenses PLAN may suffer as a result of the COUNTY'S negligence in the course of exercising any of its reserved rights as the fee owner of the Property.

8. INSURANCE.

- 8.1 *Insurance Coverage.* PLAN shall provide the COUNTY with proof of general liability insurance issued by a company authorized by license to do business in the State of New York. The policy's minimum coverages shall be \$2,000,000.00 for a single injury and \$5,000,000.00 for property damage and shall be subject to the approval of the County Attorney. PLAN may utilize umbrella/excess coverage to achieve the limits required hereunder. The certificate holder must be listed as the County of Saratoga, 40 McMaster Street, Ballston Spa, New York 12020. This insurance certificate must also name the County of Saratoga as additional insured and PLAN shall provide the COUNTY with proof of such insurance in the form of an Additional Insured Endorsement Rider or other proof acceptable to COUNTY.
- 8.2 *Policy Renewal.* In the event any policy furnished or carried pursuant to this agreement is scheduled to expire on a date prior to the expiration of the term of this agreement, PLAN shall deliver to the COUNTY a certificate or certificates of insurance evidencing the renewal of such policy or policies not less than 15 days prior to such expiration date, and PLAN shall promptly pay or cause to be paid all premiums due thereon.
- 8.3 *Notice of Cancellation.* If PLAN receives notice of cancellation of any insurance policy carried pursuant to this Agreement, PLAN shall immediately provide the COUNTY with written notice of such cancellation by no later than the next business day. In the event of such insurance policy cancellation, PLAN shall provide the COUNTY with proof of equivalent policy and limit replacement insurance satisfying the insurance requirements herein within two (2) county business days of PLAN's receipt of notice of cancellation of insurance.

- 8.4 *Breach.* Any failure by PLAN to comply with the insurance requirements of this agreement in a timely manner shall constitute a breach of this agreement, and this Agreement and all PLAN liability and obligations shall immediately terminate.
- 8.5 *Workers' Compensation.* This Agreement shall be void and of no effect unless throughout the term of this Agreement PLAN, in compliance with the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Law, shall secure compensation for the benefit of and keep insured during the life of this Agreement such employees as are required to be insured according to law. Proof of such Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage shall be provided to the COUNTY.

9. ENFORCEMENT AGAINST THIRD PARTIES

- 9.1 *Right of Enforcement.* In addition to PLAN's rights as set forth in section 4 hereinabove, COUNTY grants to PLAN rights of enforcement which include, at a minimum, the authority but not the obligation to:
- 9.1.1 Enforce the terms of this Agreement and the *Community Forest Plan* to prevent any activity on, or use of, the Property, including any trespass or unauthorized uses by others, that are inconsistent with the purposes of this Agreement or the *Community Forest Plan*, and to require the restoration of such areas or features of the Property that may be damaged or removed by any inconsistent activity or use; and
- 9.1.2 Bring an action at law or equity in a court of competent jurisdiction to enforce the terms of this Agreement in a judicial action against any person or other entity failing to comply with the terms of this Agreement or the *Community Forest Plan*. In any enforcement action, PLAN shall be entitled to any judicial remedy such as civil penalties or damages, injunction or mandamus, or an award of attorney fees, to the extent such remedies are available under the applicable provisions of New York State law.

10. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS.

- 10.1 *County Employees.* PLAN shall not employ any COUNTY official or employee in connection with this Agreement.
- 10.2 *Code of Ethics.* The Parties specifically agree that this Agreement may be canceled or terminated if any action or activity under this Agreement conflicts with the provisions of any applicable law establishing a Code of Ethics for Federal, State or Municipal officers and employees.
- 10.3 *Compliance.* PLAN shall comply with any and all applicable laws, ordinances, local laws, regulations, and resolutions, including non-discrimination and labor laws in contracting for services related to this Agreement. PLAN and the COUNTY

agree that for the duration of this Agreement, they will not discriminate against any employee, applicant for employment, or person requesting services or access because of race, creed, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, marital status, sexual preference, source of payment, or are part of any other protected class as defined by state and federal anti-discrimination laws.

10.4 *Assignment.* PLAN shall not assign or transfer any interest herein without prior written COUNTY approval.

10.5 *Subordination.* This Agreement shall be subordinate to the provisions of any existing or future agreement between COUNTY and the United States of America, the State of New York or any of their authorized agencies relative to the operation or maintenance of the Property, the execution of which has been or may be required as a condition precedent to the expenditure of federal or state funds for the development of the Property.

10.6 *Amendment.* The parties may amend this Agreement but only by a subsequent written instrument signed by all parties.

10.7 *Termination.* This agreement may be terminated by either party upon thirty (30) days written notice to the other Party pursuant to the Notice section of this Agreement, or in accordance with section 8.4 "Breach."

10.8 *Notices.* Any notice given by the COUNTY or PLAN will be sufficient only if in writing and delivered in person, mailed, or transmitted electronically by electronic mail ("e-mail") as follows:

To COUNTY:

Saratoga County Administrator
40 McMaster Street
Ballston Spa, New York 12020

With a copy to:

Saratoga County Attorney
40 McMaster Street
Ballston Spa, New York 12020

To PLAN:

Saratoga PLAN
112 Spring Street, Room 202
Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

10.9 *Applicable Law.* Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, any dispute concerning any question of fact or law arising under this Agreement which is not disposed of by agreement between COUNTY and PLAN shall be governed, interpreted and decided by a Court of competent jurisdiction of the State of New York in accordance with the laws of the State of New York.

10.10 *Force Majeure*. A force majeure event shall mean without limitation any of the following, which shall render the COUNTY or PLAN unable to fulfill, or delays each Party from fulfilling, any of its obligations under this Agreement: fire, flooding, or other acts of God including but not limited to storms, earthquakes, and other naturally occurring events; pandemics, epidemics, endemics or outbreaks; war, riot or other civil disturbance; accidents or emergencies; governmental regulations or preemption of priorities or other controls in connection with a national or other public emergency; or by any other event not within the control of the Party whose performance has been interfered with, which, by the exercise of reasonable diligence such Party is unable to prevent, whether or not of the class of events listed hereinabove. Either Party shall be excused from performance and shall not be in default with respect to any obligation in this Agreement to the extent that the failure to perform such obligation is due to a force majeure event.

10.11 *Severance*. In the event any term, sentence or provision of this Agreement is declared illegal, invalid or unenforceable or contrary to law, it shall not affect any other part of this Agreement, and said Agreement shall continue in full force and effect.

10.12 *Board Approval*. This Agreement is entered into between COUNTY and PLAN with the understanding that it shall not be binding until formally voted upon and approved by the Saratoga County Board of Supervisors, and the Saratoga PLAN, Inc. Board of Directors. The Saratoga County Board of Supervisors authorized the Chair of the Board to execute this agreement by Resolution 379-2022. Resolution 379-2022 was adopted at the regularly scheduled board meeting on December 20, 2022. Saratoga PLAN's Board of Directors approved this Agreement and authorized its Executive Director to execute this Agreement at a regularly scheduled board meeting on _____, 2023.

Exhibits

Appendix A: Insurance

Appendix B: Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Resolution 379-2022

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have hereunto signed this Agreement on the day and year appearing opposite their respective signatures.

COUNTY OF SARATOGA

By: _____

Date: _____

Theodore T. Kusnierz, Jr., Chairman
Saratoga County Board of Supervisors
Per Resolution 379-2022

Approved as to Form and Content:

Michelle W. Granger
County Attorney

SARATOGA PLAN

By: _____

Date: _____

Robert Davies, Executive Director
Saratoga PLAN

Exhibit A

(Insurance)

DRAFT

Exhibit B

(Saratoga County Board of Supervisors Resolution 379-2022)

DRAFT

